Musings . .
. . in Verse

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MUSINGS IN VERSE.

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BY

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In Memoriam.

WILLIAM EWART GLADSTONE.

Born December 29th, 1809.

Died May 19th, 1898.

AGAIN the reaper Death has passed along
Upon his ceaseless journey through the earth,
And claimed the aged statesman for his own
Towards whom for many weeks all eyes have turned.
Ye busy men, immersed in daily cares,
Ye anxious mothers, toiling through each hour,
Lay down your duties for a little while,
And bend the head, in reverent silence bend,
For an immortal soul has passed from earth
Whose like we scarce can hope to see again.

To-day a nation sorrows for his loss,
Without respect of party, church, or creed,
For it is felt he was her noblest son:
And yet we should not mourn, but thankful be
For all that he has been and done for men.
Still can we stay the tears which perforce flow;—
It is but human, we will let them fall.
And yet to him it cannot but be gain,
For his full years had brought him sorest pain.
He waited patiently for his great change,
And so at length Death called him as a friend.
He gently, sweetly, softly fell asleep.
His work was done. His life had been well spent
In noblest service for the human race.
Where'er English is spoken through the world,
Nay, in each clime beneath the setting sun
Gladstone was honoured as the Grand Old Man,
As statesman, scholar, orator, divine.
Hero he was of many a well-fought fight,—
Not on the battlefield where blood is shed;—
On platform, and within the nation's hall
Where laws are made to guide the nation's course.

He laboured hard throughout his long career
For the Empire he ever loved so well,
For righteous laws, for peace, for justice too,—
To break the tyrant's yoke throughout the world,
And let the oppressed in every clime go free.
Howe'er unpopular a cause might be
He shrank not from it if he deemed it just.
Noble in triumph, not less so in defeat,
A life of spotless honour he e'er lived,
So full of courtly dignity, of truth
And duty; so fresh and buoyant ever.
No love of ease, or selfish interest
E'er made him swerve from what he deemed the right,
Nor could one point finger of scorn at him
Who wore white flower of a blameless life.
And now his long and honoured course is run,
Life's burden of full years he has laid down;
Like the old general who has sheathed his sword,
He rests from labours he has loved so well,
Heaven's crown has gained and entered into rest.
But, Gladstone, we shall sorrow long for you,
For without you the earth much poorer seems.

The nation mourns her grandest, noblest son,
While the whole world vibrates with sympathy.
Inscribed on history's page, throughout all time
Your name shall live within the hearts of men.
We hear no more your wondrous speech and voice;
But Heaven has gained what we on earth have lost.
A silent tear we'll shed around your tomb,
Within our hearts your memory we'll keep green,
Nor shall it fade so long as time remains.
Rest now in peace. Your victory is won.

DEDICATION HYMN FOR A CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

Oh God! this Church to Thee we've raised,
Within its walls Thy name be praised;
May this be always hallowed ground,
Where rest and peace shall e'er be found.

Oft as we come with burdened heart,
Here may we learn the better part;
And gain from prayer light, strength, and hope,
More bravely with life's claims to cope.

Here may our path become more clear,
Here to our hearts may faith bring cheer,
Here may our souls, on wings of prayer,
Rise into a serener air.

Here may we learn from Christ Thy Son
More faithfully our course to run;
Here may his love our hearts inspire,
And glow within,—a heavenly fire.

Here may we climb the heavenly hill,
Gain clearer glimpses of Thy will;
And, strengthened thus by prayer and praise,
Go forth renewed to tread life's ways.

Oh God! in love to Thee we raise
This earthly temple for Thy praise;
Oft as we meet to worship Thee,
May we to Thee still nearer be.

DIVINE GUIDANCE.

Lead, Kindly One! lead Thou me on
O'er life's tumultuous sea;
This earth is not my final home,
Lead my frail barque to Thee.

Life's path ofttimes seems dark and drear,
And lone as if 'twere night;
So many rocks and shoals appear
To hide Thee from my sight.

If Thou be near all darkness flies,
All doubts and fears are gone;
Begone these dull and lowering skies
If my soul be Thy home.

Duty oft calls, but I am weak,
And prone to halt and stray ;
Give Thou me strength that I may seek
Obedience to its lay.

Be Thou my cloud, e'er near by day,
My pillar of fire by night,
To guide me on life's rugged way,
Help me towards duty's height.

Strengthen my heart in virtue's way,
My steps do Thou direct,
In fiery trials be Thou my stay,
To keep my head erect.

Then, when at length my life is o'er,
I still will trust in Thee ;
As I draw near the heavenly shore,
My thanks ceaseless shall be.

EVENING HYMN.

ANOTHER day has passed away,
Once more the evening hour has come,
The little child has ceased to play,
The busy man now seeks his home.

What offerings can we bring to Thee,
Oh God! from whom all blessings come?
For all we are, and have, and see,
Are ceaseless gifts from Thy great throne.

Yet Thou would'st have us come to Thee
E'en if our gifts be only small,
As children to their dearest friend;
Thou knowest each, Thou lovest all.

Each brings to Thee a wayward heart
With all its sorrows, sins, and cares,
Longing to act the better part,
Oft led astray by many snares.

Dear Father! we look up to Thee,
Oh breathe Thou into us fresh life,
That, when we from Thy presence flee,
We stronger feel for duty's strife.

Be with us through the coming night;
If storm without bring calm within,
Give us Thy strength, Thy peace, Thy light,
To keep us brave and free from sin.

Then send us forth, oh God! once more,
Anew with duty to contend,
With freshened strength and increased store,
Wherein faith, hope, and love do blend.

MORNING HYMN.

Another night has passed away,
Once more the morning hour is here;
That Thou hast brought us to this day
We thank Thee, oh Thou Father dear.

For rest, and sleep, and quiet thought,
For visions of the far-off time,
We're glad that these to us Thou'st brought,
To give us strength life's hill to climb.

For memories of friends most dear—
Who once with us life's pathway trod—
Which fade not with the circling year,
We thank Thee, O Thou Blessed God.

For thoughts of places we have seen,
Of kindly deeds we may have done,
Which came to cheer us in our dream,
We bless Thee, ere the day's begun.

Be with us through this new-born day,
Lead us through darkness into light,
Help us to serve Thee every way
By being faithful in life's fight.

Amid the ceaseless toil and strife
By which we are surrounded here
Help us to purer, nobler life,
To truer service, sight more clear.

Uphold us when our strength grows weak,
Direct us when our path seems dim;
Throughout each hour Thy will we seek,
That each may lead us nearer Heaven.

To daily task once more we go,
Give us Thy blessing on our way;
In all our goings to and fro
Be Thou our Guide, our Strength, our Stay.

SWITZERLAND.

Dear Land of mountains towering high,
Of winding lake and flowing river,
Of fertile vale and wooded slope,
Of torrent wild and rocky steep,
Of glacier green and glistening snow
Where foot of man but seldom treads;
Of simple, lovely flowers that grow
In meadow sweet, on mountain slope;
Of graceful fern in rocky cleft,
Of stately and majestic trees.
Land of warm sunshine and of storm,
Of glowing sunset, brightening dawn,
Of rainbow promise and thick mist—
A welcome new I give to thee.
Not as a stranger do I come,
For many times I've roamed o'er thee:
Oft have I climbed thy mountain sides,
Oft have I sailed upon thy lakes,

Oft have I tramped thy narrow vales
In search of beauty, grandeur, strength—
Yet art thou ever fresh to me,
And with great joy I come to thee.
Within thy borders weary man
Oft comes for rest and change of scene,
And there lays down his many cares:
So much hast thou to offer him,
To make him wonder and adore,
To raise his thoughts from earth below
To God on high who made all things.
If all the beauties he there sees,
And all the wonders they reveal
Are thoughts of God who reigns o'er all,
His ways of working, everywhere,
How wondrous must Our Father be
In beauty, wisdom, glory, strength.
Dear Land! thou hast so much to teach
To restless, struggling human kind.
Thy love of freedom and of truth,
Thy struggles keen for liberty,
Have made thy people pure and brave,

Simple and honest, more than most.
Thy contests too for equal laws,
That each may have an equal share,
And feel he has a voice in thee,
Should teach us faith in brother man.
Can we forget those of thy sons—
Not great, perchance, in worldly store,
But, what's far better, heavenly love—
Men who e'er strove throughout their life
To make more clear to us God's thoughts.
Calvin, Servetus, Zwingli, Huss,
And others, perhaps less known to us;
These, though they differed, were God's saints
To lead us nearer unto Him.
Dear Land! I wish thee all of good;
Act well thy part upon life's stage.
Long may men roam thy country o'er
And find fresh thought, and hope, and strength!
Oft as they come to thee for change
May they return renewed again.
Long may thy sons be brave and free!
Long be thou loved of men and heaven!

THE ALPINE FLOWER.

Thou little flower of brightest hue
That grows on mountain slope and height,
Oft out of reach of human view,
Yet art Thou nearer Heaven's light.

Think not that there thou art alone,
Or that thy life is spent in vain,
For thou hast many friends near home,
To share thy lonely life they're fain.

Many a bird soars near thy home,
Near thee the merry streamlet's found,
The sun shines out from his great dome,
And nature's glory's all around.

In quiet nooks thou oft dost grow
Where neither man nor beast do tread;
It may be wisely ordered so,
Yet thou of God art seen and fed.

From sun and stream thou drinkest in
The beauty which does colour thee ;
That beauty is the smile of Him
To whom we all do bend the knee.

The busy bee in thee finds food,
The birds gaze on thee as they fly,
The little stream says thou art good,
Man loves to climb towards thee on high.

Sweet Alpine flower, bloom ever on,
Where'er thou art, whate'er thou be,
This glorious earth thou growest on
More beautiful is made by thee.

And when I climb the mountain slope,
Or find thee in some quiet place,
I'll gaze upon thee with fresh hope,
Who liv'st thy life with sweetest grace.

Thou bonny flower, on lonely height,
Who blooms where oft unseen by men,
God's fingers paint thy petals bright,
Bloom on, thou'rt ne'er beyond His ken.

THE ALPINE STREAM.

Thou little, merry stream
That runs so sweetly by;
How cheery thou dost seem,
Descending from on high.

What message dost thou bring
From thy far-distant home?
I'll stay to hear thee sing,
I will not from thee roam.

High up the mountain side
Thou spring'st, we scarce know when,
Man seeks, but thou dost hide,
Thou'rt modest, from his ken.

Yet from eternal snow
And ice thou dost e'er come;
The warm sun makes thee flow,
But cold must be thy home.

Then bounding on thy way
Thou mak'st thyself a course ;
Nothing thy leaps can stay,
Thou runn'st with greatening force.

Thy destined goal's the sea,
To it thy steps e'er tend,
Where'er thy pathway be,
Nought turns thee from this end.

Thou art so frolicsome,
Yet of fixed purpose full,
Welcome where thou dost roam,
Weary hearts thou dost lull.

Thou makest many a friend :
The tender grass and fern
And flowers without end
Some blessing from thee earn.

Thou help'st to feed the flowers,
To give them colours bright ;
Thou coolest sunny hours,
And bring'st to all delight.

Thou hast a work to do
None else can do so well,
So onwards thou must go;
Still, do thy story tell.

Thou com'st the earth to freshen,
To gladden, beautify,
To be of use to men,
To serve the God on high.

Of many a lovely flower
Companion on thy way;
Thou giv'st me joy each hour,
While I near thee can stay.

Rush on from day to day
Thou merry mountain stream;
Long may thy welcome lay
Make man more joyous seem.

Leave blessings as you flow,
Give freshness, beauty, zest,
And friends round thee will grow,
Man, too, near thee find rest.

On thee I love to look,
Thy voice I joy to hear;
The flowers within each nook
Make thee to me more dear.

Thou bringest me fresh strength,
For future thought, fresh food;
By thee I'll stretch full length
While I gain some new good.

And as thou onwards flow'st,
Fresh force thou gatherest;
Richer blessings bestow'st,
And still thou hast no rest.

Leaping, splashing, babbling,
From early dawn till night,
Thou teachest, unresting,
Be constant in the right.

Then go I on my way—
Like thee, my work's ne'er done—
Nor linger nor delay
Until life's goal be won.

BIRTHDAY THOUGHTS.

ANOTHER year! another year!
How quickly it has passed away,—
Gone like the shedding of a tear;
Gone like the acting of a play.

It only seems a little while
Since last a birthday came to me;
Yet I have marched another mile
Along the path which leads to Thee.

What use I've made of this Thy gift
Thou knowest fully, oh my God!
My soul to Thee I will uplift,
As I review the course I've trod.

Another year of brightening dawn,
Another year of setting sun,
Of ceaseless mercy Thou hast shown,
Of many duties left undone.

And now, O Lord, I bring to Thee
My story, varied as the year;
Thou know'st it all, Thou all canst see,
But still Thou lov'st it all to hear.

Bright hopes that filled the morning hour
Have faded ere the noonday came,
And left me stranded on life's shore,
To feel it's an uncertain game.

How often I've forgotten Thee,
How oft Thy finger failed to trace;
Yet Thou hast not forgotten me,
But led me on with sweetest grace.

Forgive my broken promises.
Accept my penitential tears;
Duties stern path I so oft miss,
Give me fresh hope for coming years.

If still Thou hast in store for me
More years of active service here,
O give me vision clear to see,
And strength to serve Thee year by year.

Lead Thou me on from day to day,
From rosy morn to evening shade;
That at each birthday I can say—
'I'm nearer God, I've Him obeyed.'

Whate'er this year may be to me,
Give me new strength, faith, hope, and love;
Let all my days be spent for Thee,
To lift men's lives towards Heaven above.

Once more I'll give myself to Thee,
Make use of me in Thine own way;
I wish Thy faithful son to be,
Nearer Thee draw me day by day.

GOOD BYE.

Good bye, good bye, a sweet good bye,
A warm hand clasp, a tender look,
A trembling whisper, gentle sigh,—
To say 'Farewell' 'tis hard to brook.

We little know what may befall,
The future is to us unknown;
How much these simple words recall,
'Good bye, good bye'—then we're alone.

The little child sets out for school
With lightsome heart, without a fear,
Yet ere he leaves to act his rôle
He says 'Good Bye' to Mother dear.

The young man to the world goes forth
With hope, his future name to make,
And, ere he leaves the dear old hearth,
Says sweet 'Good Bye' for parents' sake.

The Daughter, who her troth has sworn
To leave her home, one more to make,
With fond caress, on wedding morn,
Says 'Good Bye,' ere the step she take.

The anxious Father too, as well,
Goes forth each morn his part to take,
As home he leaves, his heart doth swell,
Says 'Good Bye' to his loved Helpmate.

Ah! little as 'Good Bye' we say,
We think what may to us befall;
'Tis well we do not see our way,
But trust it's good for each, for all.

Whene'er from our dear friends we part
With tenderness we'll clasp the hand,
And say 'Good Bye,' from heart to heart,
As travellers in an unknown land.

If 'tis the last time on life's way,
We've still the trust of Heaven born,
The farewells that on earth we say
Will always lead to Heaven's 'Good Morn.'

LITTLE MARY.

One day a little maid drew near
And placed in mine her tiny hand ;
She prattled on without a fear,
Soothed me as if with magic wand.

And as I felt her warm hand clasp,
And listened to her simple talk ;
I felt a thrill which made me grasp
Her hand more firmly on our walk.

Oh sweet, confiding, loving trust
That for the morrow has no fear,
Content to walk e'er onwards, just
As if no danger could be near.

Can I but learn from you, young friend,
To catch the sunshine on my way,
'Twould through my heart fresh cheer oft send
And make life brighter every day.

Could I my Father's hand but clasp,
And walk with Him from day to day,
As, little maid, you mine did grasp
As on we went our pleasant way;—

Could I but have the same bright cheer,
Unshaken trust, and simple faith,
Life might become still far more dear,
And choicest flowers spring on my path.

Yet this is what our Father asks
From all who are His children dear,
In childlike trust to do life's tasks,
E'er reaching forth to light more clear.

My little maid, still clasp my hand
If you such lessons me can teach,
For as I journey through the land
You'll help me nearer God to reach.

HOPE.

Sweet Hope, sweet Hope, so dear to me,
Which brightens e'en the saddest heart,
What would our life be without thee?
How could we act the better part?

Thou makest glad many a morn,
Thou givest cheer 'mid noonday heat,
At set of sun new joy is born,
With thee we never know defeat.

Upon our path how oft we find
There are steep hills which tax our strength;
Thou lur'st us on our upward climb
By thoughts of what we'll see at length.

How often dark clouds intervene
To dim the view we fain would see,
The goal that in our dreams we've seen
Fast fades: we're lost upon life's sea.

Thy presence gilds the darkest sky,
And through the storm casts rainbow tints,
Before thee seeming dangers fly,
Thou giv'st new strength, new thoughts, new hints.

Dear Star of Hope! shine on our way,
Be with us e'er life's journey through,
Speak in sweet whispers day by day,
Inspire and guide in all we do.

And as the little birds oft sing
When skies are dark, and wild the storm,
So Hope, thy sweetest message bring
When most we're weary and forlorn.

Bid us arise, and give us sight
Behind the clouds to trace the sun,
Through darkness lead us up to light,
Bring strength and cheer life's race to run.

TRUST.

We cannot see our future way,
It lies all hidden from our sight;
Still press we forward day by day,
And trust that all things will come right.

As o'er the past we cast our eyes
And see the path that we have trodden,
The foes that made our fears arise
Have failed before fresh strength from Heaven.

The doubts our spirits oft have fret
And made our life feel insecure
Vanished, when they were boldly met,
And gave place unto faith more sure.

Difficulties, which too have come
To try our patience and our strength,
Like mist before the morning sun
Have lifted silently at length.

And when there loomed upon our path
Grim danger to make us despair,
It wanted only courage, faith,
To meet it calmly, without fear.

So Trust will gently lift the veil
As day by day we journey on
O'er moor and fen, o'er hill and dale,
Until the setting of each sun.

Let not to-morrow's toil and care
Make dim the brightness of to-day;
But do our duty without fear,
And catch the sunshine on our way.

Thus let us onwards press again,
And trust that God is with us still,
That through all darkness and all pain
He'll lead us to His Heavenly Hill.

THE FORGET-ME-NOT.

Thou little flower of daintiest blue,
In hedgerow found and garden too,
A priceless messenger thou art
From many a holy, loving heart.

From year to year thou comest near,
Dying not with the passing year;
The winter cold may shed thy bloom,
With Spring again we see thee come.

Oft as I gaze upon thy face
When passing by with quickened pace,
Thou bring'st from out the hallowed past
Sweet memories, which for long do last.

Memories of some dear ones who
Once walked near me life's valley through,
But now have passed beyond the veil,
Leaving my sunlit path more pale.

With tender hand they smoothed my way,
And smiled upon me day by day;
They guarded me from many snares,
And tried to help me with their prayers.

But now, alas! it is too late,
Since they have passed the Heavenly Gate;
Yet can I think of them as dead,
Though they no longer life's road tread?

Oh no, not so, they cannot die,
Their spirits live with God on high;
In many a quiet, holy hour
They speak to me with quickening power.

Is it not well they thus can come
To hallow care, and bless the home?
That when the most alone we seem,
They whisper to us o'er the stream.

If such the thoughts which thou canst bear,
Bloom on, sweet flower, from year to year,
Remind me of the sacred past,
Its loved ones, long as life shall last.

Oft as I gaze upon thy face
May tender thoughts in me find place
Of those who have been kind to me,
Whoe'er they are, where'er they be.

And as I pluck thy welcome bloom
To give to those who near me roam,
I'll always sweetly muse on thee,
Forget-me-not, think too of me.

FLOWERS.

Ye flowers sweet that spring
  Along my earthly way,
What message do you bring
  From the unknown, I pray?

E'en though you have no speech,
  And grow so silently,
You many lessons teach,
  Have we but eyes to see?

O'er all the earth you bloom;
  On mountain slope and height,
In fertile vale and combe,
  Our gardens you make bright.

In meadow and hedgerow,
  By winding river bank,
In forest wild you grow;
  Of ever varying rank.

Of varying size and shape,
And many-coloured hue,
Our lovely earth you drape,
And make it ever new.

Without your colours bright,
Without your scent so sweet,
How little of delight
Along our path we meet.

However great or small,
Where'er your lot is cast,
You're faithful to your call
So long as life does last.

Where'er your place may be
In this fair world of ours,
You fill it gracefully,
Oh, sweet and precious flowers.

For self you do not live,
You live for all mankind,
To all you pleasure give,
In this your mission find.

You make the earth more bright,
More sweet, more beautiful,
This is your purpose right;
What good from you we cull!

However dark it be,
You turn your petals bright,
And stretch forth constantly
Towards fuller, clearer light.

Sweet flowers, may we like you
Be faithful through life's day,
Brightness and sweetness strew
Around our earthly way.

And when our work is done,
And earth's last course we take,
Like you, at set of sun,
We'll sleep again to wake.

THE MOUNTAIN VIOLET.

Besides a rushing, mountain stream
A little violet quietly grew,
So modest it could scarce be seen,
Yet all around it sweetness strew.

Upon its brightly-coloured face
The glorious sun did often shine;
With sun and shower it grew apace,
Nor did it midst its quiet pine.

The little birds sang o'er its head,
The busy insects round it flew,
Few footsteps sauntered near its bed,
Its dwelling place not many knew.

At morn it lift its gentle face,
Made lovelier still by early dew;
At night it kept its lonely place,
Shielded by ferns which near it grew.

Yes, there it lived its quiet life,
Content to grow, and bloom, and die;
Far, far away from worldly strife,
It looked up sweetly towards the sky.

Oh, modest flower, like you may I
My daily life untiring live;
And, as the time goes swiftly bye,
True pleasure all around me give.

In darkest as in brightest hour
Still let me turn to God my face
As to the sun, you, bonny flower,
Your petals turn with sweetest grace.

Though lowly here my lot may be,
Oh, let me beautify my place,
In all my ways God's guidance see,
And serve Him e'er with lowliest grace.

SPRING.

The winter days have come and gone
With snow, and hail, and biting frost;
Again we see the glorious sun
That almost seemed as if 'twere lost.

The short days are lengthening out,
A balmier breeze blows o'er the land,
The merry birds now fly about
And sing for joy on every hand.

The gentle rain falls on the ground
And wakes to life what once seemed dead,
And linked with sun these go their round,
Nature by them is onwards led.

The tender grass begins to grow,
The ferns their tiny fronds unfold,
And through creation there does flow
A stream of new life, manifold.

The trees which round my garden grow,
How many a fierce gale withstand ;
Each branch some bursting life does show,
We see new growth on every hand.

And through the cold and hardened soil
The lovely flowers begin to peep,
They bring us joy amid earth's toil,
From them we always good can reap.

Oh, beautiful and joyous Spring !
That comes again so full of glee,
Of flowers sweet, and birds that sing ;
How gladly do I welcome thee.

All things seem instinct with new life,
A different feel pervades the air,
There's now no time for hateful strife,
But work which lighteneth life's care.

From tiny seed and leafless tree
There cometh beauteous growth and flowers ;
Yet, though we cannot fathom thee,
We'll commune with thee many hours.

Oh, Giver of the gladsome Spring
That breathest into all fresh life ;
Once more the ceaseless seasons bring
Spring round again with blessings rife.

So as thy healthful breezes blow,
Destroy in us low aim and care,
And help us tiny seeds to sow,
To bloom in faith, hope, love, and prayer.

And though the rolling seasons be
Expressive of the Father's ways,
In joyous Springtide do we see
Some prophecy of brighter days.

But while we muse we cannot tell
What name God's fulness can declare ;
Within His sight we know we dwell,
And feel He has us in His care.

A ROBIN'S MESSAGE.

It was upon a wintry day
When all around seemed cold and bleak:
The snow across my garden lay,
The warm fireside I wished to seek.

Above, the sky was dull and gray,
The biting winds did blow around,
E'en sunny nature lost her play,
We heard from her no joyful sound.

But, gazing on a leafless tree,
I saw a tiny robin there
Singing away right cheerily,
As if it knew no fear, no care.

Sometimes it flew upon the ground,
Picked up a tiny crumb or seed,
Again the leafless branch it found,
It was too busy me to heed.

It had supplied its simple needs,
What cared it now if earth were sad ?
It could not show its thanks by deeds,
But sing it must, it felt so glad.

' Oh, little bird, why have you come
Upon this dull and dreary day ?
Why have you left your secret home ?
Have you some message, say, I pray ? '

' Yes, I am but a tiny bird,
Of fewest wants and low degree,
Yet have you not my message heard ?
It is "the dear God cares for me."

He blesses me with parents kind,
He gives a nest to keep me warm,
He gives me wings that I may find
My food, and shields me from all harm.

I soon supply my simple wants,
And then I hop about and fly,
I warble forth my warmest thanks,
So do I praise the God on high.

Oh, restless man ! learn this from me,
If you would always happy be,
Your wants be few, your thanks many,
And duty's path strive e'er to see.

Since the dear God thus cares for me,
A little bird of but few days,
Will He to you not much more be
A Father true in all His ways ?

Then come what may of cloud or sun,
Each day your simple duty do,
And when at night your work is done,
Your evensong of thanks rise too.'

MY GARDEN THRUSH.

My little feathered friend
I gladly welcome you,
'Tis long since you did wend
Your flight across the blue.

When days are dark and drear,
And biting winds do blow,
And snow and frost appear,
Away from sight you go.

'Tis not for winter bleak
Your tender frame is given,
Bright sunshine you must seek,
From here you then are driven.

God calls you then away,
Perchance to warmer skies,
To serve Him still each day
Your merry songs arise.

Without your sweet, clear note,
How dull my garden's seemed;
On you so much I dote,
Of you sometimes I've dreamed.

I've wondered where you've been
Throughout the cold dark days;
But truly God has seen
You safe, so Him e'er praise.

But once again you've come
Into my garden sweet,
The same tree is your home,
You cheerily me greet.

Have you some message clear
Brought from a sunnier sky?
To us what do you bear
As o'er the earth you fly?

Though but a tiny bird,
You still by God are led;
Some whisper you have heard
From Him, let it be said.

You speak to me of Spring,
Of brighter, warmer days;
To me fresh hopes you bring
To help to tread life's ways.

At early morn I hear
You come your thanks to sing;
At sunset you appear
Your evening song to bring.

How oft throughout each day
Your merry notes you fling,
And with your ceaseless lay
You make my garden ring.

From you, my little friend,
Can I some lessons learn:
With duty thanks to blend,
And so God's blessing earn.

At morn, ere I begin
My daily tasks to do,
Let me rejoicing sing
My thanks for blessings true.

At nightly set of sun,
Ere slumber close my eyes,
With thoughts of duty done,
My songs of thanks shall rise.

And as you fold your wing,
Then rest without a fear,
May evening to me bring
Sweet sleep, without a care.

Oh, little merry thrush!
My garden make your home,
From leafy tree or bush
Sing on, I'll near thee come.

Keep near me through the year,
Make melody each day,
And, if when cold appear,
You can no longer stay,

With sorrow we will part;
But hope when winter's o'er
That you'll make glad my heart
With sweet songs, as of yore.

THE YEAR'S LAST NIGHT.

The Old Year's dying in the night,
  How soon the new one will be born ;
What takes the old one from our sight ?
  Brings in the new a brighter morn ?

Have we lost many loving friends ?
  Do health, or faith, or courage fail ?
Are we, as the year's journey ends,
  On upland slope, low down in vale ?

Each day that Thou hast to us given
  Came laden with fresh thought and hope ;
In each have we drawn nearer Heaven,
  With daily duty learned to cope.

Oh God ! as we look up to Thee,
  And in Thy sight review the past,
Our many failures we can see
  As darkened shadows they each cast.

Yet patient with us hast Thou been
Though we've so oft forgotten Thee,
And when we've failed 'mid struggle keen,
New strength has come on bended knee.

Though we the past cannot erase,
Its many scars not wholly heal,
Let freshened hopes in us find place
As in Thy sight 'fore Thee we kneel.

What this New Year may have in store
We do not know, we dare not say,
Still may we trust Thee more and more
As on we journey day by day.

Our path to see we will not pine,
Content in faith each step to take,
In trust we'll place our hands in Thine,
Lead Thou us on for love's sweet sake.

Before, we see the loftier height
Made radiant by heavenly glow,
Towards it we'll climb with armour bright,
With faithful, plodding step, though slow.

Once more we journey towards the sun,
To warmer skies and lengthening days ;
Be it to duties nobly done,
To higher truth, and holier praise.

Be it as well towards purer laws,
Towards sweeter manners, tenderer love ;
In pressing onwards know no pause
In marching towards Heaven above.

As a new friend then comes this year,
A gift fresh from the Father's hand ;
Each day may His voice seem more clear
To guide us through this wondrous land.

A NEW YEAR'S THOUGHT.

The night was very still and clear,
And, as the hour of twelve did chime,
I opened wide a window near
To hear the bells ring in new time.

The merry bells! how sweet they sound
As floating through the midnight air
They tell in no uncertain sound
The long-expected New Year's here.

Oh, New Year! strange to us thou art,
Yet gladly we will welcome thee,
From old friends we must sometime part,
We hope a new friend thou wilt be.

What message do you bring to us
From out the secret and unknown?
Is it too much to question thus?
Let us know it ere thou hast flown.

We feel like children wandering
Along a dim and mystic way ;
Can't you some light unto us bring
To make more clear life's little day.

Thou com'st to us so fresh and young,
So full of vigour and of glee ;
Then sing to us some hopeful song
To help us on our onward way.

We know not what thou hast in store,
Nor where thy devious steps may lead ;
But we must trust thee more and more,
Through stormy seas or flowery mead.

What marvel or surprise thou hast,
What hills to climb, what cross to bear ;
Each day e'er seems to fly so fast,
God takes our hand. We will not fear.

New joys to make us glad are sent,
Like flowers, they spring up on our way ;
Some talents, too, to us are lent
That we may use them faithfully.

New thoughts to think, new words to speak,
  New hopes to brighten as we go,
New ideals that we must seek,
  New seeds of truth and love to sow.

And if we cannot trace the path
  Our trembling feet oft have to tread,
We'll journey on in trust and faith
  That we shall e'er be safely led.

So, New-born Year, friends let us be—
  We'll travel forward without fear,
And day by day more clearly see
  Our Father guides us through the year.

SUNDAY.

What means this solemn silence round ?
What mean these sweetly-sounding bells ?
A holier stillness too is found,
Which in the heart all tumult quells.

They tell another week has gone,
With all its anxious toil and care ;
Another blessed halt has come
To give us strength to do and dare.

Sweet day of holy, gracious calm,
From earthly bondage glad release,
That brings to sorrow, healing balm,
That brings the weary, soothing peace.

Sweet day of quiet, reverent thought,
Of precious memories of the past,
Of soul upliftings which are fraught
With richest good, which long may last.

This day be angry passions stilled ;
And through its quickly passing hours
With thoughts of peace our hearts be filled.
With faith, hope, love, life's sweetest flowers.

Oh God ! we'll leave this narrow vale
Wherein we spend so many days,
And climb aloft till strength does fail,
Breathe purer air, sing sweeter praise.

So as we toil 'long life's rough way,
Sweet resting day, we'll welcome thee,
To lead us from low self away,
That more of God and Heaven we see.

SUNDAY EVENING.

Evening shadows gather round,
Stilled is every earthly sound;
Father! in this silent hour
Speak to us with quickening power.

Lay we down each worldly care
In this quiet hour of prayer;
Hush we every anxious fear,
Feeling that Our Father's near.

Father! take away all doubt,
Give us peace within, without,
To our spirits bring sweet rest,
Give us visions of the blest.

Give unto us sight more clear,
Help us now Thy voice to hear;
In this solemn eventide
Let us near to Thee abide.

Then when from this House of Prayer
We go forth to meet life's care,
May we feel this holy hour
Touched us with God's quickening power.

THE CLOSE OF DAY.

Over the busy world
The shades of night have come,
The sounds of pleasant mirth
We hear not in the home.

Where once were toil and thought,
And speech and laughter free,
The darksome night has brought
A stillness glad, holy.

Without, though it be dark,
Within, Heaven's light have sway,
Let peace and quiet mark
The ending of the day.

Ye anxious cares begone,
Which fill us through the day,
Father, at set of sun
In us have Thine own way.

If from stern duty's call
This day we've gone astray,
Father, Thou know'st it all,
Why we did not obey.

We wish Thy will to do
But often are too weak,
We wander to and fro,
We should near Thee e'er keep.

Did we but turn to Thee
As flowers turn to the sun
We should more clearly see
The path to Heaven's well done.

As we lie down to sleep
Surround us by Thy care,
Give us sweet peace, and keep
Us free from every fear.

Renew our strength and will,
Our sight make Thou more clear
Life's duties to fulfil,
So daily Thee draw near.

Father of love Thou art,
Thou know'st we would love Thee,
With this thought in our heart
We'll sweetly rest in Thee.

So as the little bird
Its cheery song first sings,
Making its sweet notes heard,
Then folds its tiny wings;

Thus at our close of day
Thankful we'll look above,
For constant guidance pray,
Then shelter in God's love.

And when we rise from sleep
We joyfully will say
God doth us safely keep,
And gladly go His way.

So Father! at Thy feet
This closing day we lay,
As, through its storm and heat,
Be with us now we pray.

RAIN.

Pitter, patter, falling rain,
Right against my window pane,
Drawing me from self away,
There to watch thy merry play.

In whatever form thou art
There is still for thee some part,
Copious shower, gentle rain,
Never fall on earth in vain.

Stagnant waters to renew,
Oceans, rivers, lakes, springs too,
Drink refreshing to provide
Lowing cattle by their side.

Thou dost purify the air,
Make the parched earth more fair,
Wake to life the dormant seed
Which to glorious growth doth lead.

At thy magic touch the earth
Is renewed as by new birth,
Stately trees fresh beauty show,
Sweetest flowers more fragrant grow.

After gentle rain the sun,
So is nature's work best done,
Near each other ever stay,
Scattering blessings by the way.

Thus we know the freshening rain
Never falls on earth in vain,
So may Heaven's perennial grace
In each find sweet resting place.

As then on you, gentle rain,
I gaze through my window pane,
I will think of you for e'er
As a Heaven-sent messenger.

CATCH THE SUNSHINE.

Oh catch the sunshine while you may,
It cannot always last,
The sky may become cold and grey
Before the day is past.

Not always can we hope to see
The sun shine bright and clear,
So let us ever thankful be
When he shines on us here.

Beneath his constant glare and heat
We soon should faint and tire,
And need sometimes a cool retreat
To shield us from his fire.

Yet when he shines upon our way
How glad we always feel,
The little birds sing merrily,
The flowers their cups unveil.

The little stream more gladsome seems,
Its murmur's full of mirth,
The air with busy insects teems,
Of joy there seems no dearth.

Only by sunshine and by shade
Can earth its best produce,
Without each all things soon would fade,
Life be of little use.

We'll gladly welcome then the sun,
So full of warmth and cheer,
And if sometimes the shade must come
It will not last for e'er.

It passeth silently away,
But yet it seems to tell
There will soon come a brighter day ;
Why not your murmurings quell ?

So treasure up the bright sun's rays
Upon your earthly way,
To fill your heart with cheer and praise
When comes a cloudy day.

LIGHT AT EVENTIDE.

Once more the evening hour has come,
The daylight slowly fades away,
Yet as we look towards setting sun
It seems more bright than through the day.

And as he dips 'neath western sky
A glorious light he leaves behind
Of many tints; too soon they die,
And then 'tis darksome night we find.

The glare and heat of day are gone,
Our toils and cares we lay aside,
How beautiful to see the sun
Set with bright light at eventide.

And while his glowing tints remain
To clothe the earth with beauteous light,
A strange calm fills the world we'd fain
Keep with us through life's day and night.

Yet as the sun goes from our sight
On other lands he shines again,
And bears once more both heat and light,
And many a blessing in his train.

So Father! when life's day is o'er,
And evening shadows gather round,
Lead us to the Eternal Shore,
At eventide let light abound.

And as we cross the Unknown Sea
Oh be Thou near our steps to guide,
Do Thou our Strength and Stay e'er be,
We'll in Thy sheltering love abide.

So ever as from setting sun
Some radiant glories we do find,
God grant that when our life work's done
We too may leave some light behind.

Some light to brighten earth's dark days,
To cheer the lonely, weary soul,
Some light to guide the wanderer's ways
As on he treads towards distant goal.

So as each passing day goes bye,
And darkening shades with us abide,
We'll lift our grateful songs on high,
That God gives light at eventide.

WITHOUT HASTE, WITHOUT REST.

Without haste and without rest,
Motto meet for noblest man,
If we wish to reap the best
This the spirit of life's plan.

'Tis not often greatest speed
Makes most progress on the road,
Some things take much time to heed,
Hurry lightens not life's load.

It's not always wise to say
Let us ever hasten on,
We may miss from day to day
Something only known when gone.

If we look around our path
As we slowly journey on
There is much that each day hath
To teach us ere set of sun.

Little duties we may do
That will make our life more full,
Little acts of kindness too,
That will brighten lives too dull.

Little peeps through hedgerow high
O'er the landscape bright and fair,
Glimpse of higher life e'er nigh
That we miss 'mid haste and care.

Quiet nooks where we might rest
From the heat and glare of sun,
Send us forth with freshened zest
Till the whole day's work is done.

Many pleasures thus would come
On our way to make us glad,
But we ever hurry on
Passing by them, then we're sad.

Thus we see its not all gain
That we win with quickening pace,
Much we lose that we would fain
Have kept with us through life's race.

If we wish to climb a hill
Up its steep slopes we must mount
Slowly, step by step until
Summit gained our steps we count.

Slowly, ceaseless, nature's plan,
First the blade and then the ear,
Large trees spring not o'er the land,
They grow slowly year by year.

We must e'er remember too
Idlers never find a place,
They oft sleep while others sow,
Slow but constant wins the race.

Great men reached not with one bound
Lofty heights on which they stand,
Ceaseless toiled they on life's round,
While we rested with clasped hand.

Little know we of their pain,
How they often longed for rest,
But they felt their height to gain
They must ever do their best.

Often through the mist and cloud,
O'er the torrent wild, and crag,
Wind and waters murmur loud
Still their spirits never flag.

And when they look back and see
All the path which they once trod,
Weariness and doubt now flee,
Since they feel they're nearer God.

So if we would make the best
Of the life which God has given,
Without haste and without rest
Is the surest way to Heaven.

ONLY A LITTLE.

It's only a little leak
In the mighty vessel's sides,
Yet through it the waters break,
She no longer proudly rides.

Only a little raindrop
Alights on the parchèd ground,
It helps to a richer crop,
And freshens the earth all round.

Only a little hard seed
To cast in some silent earth,
So small as to scarcely heed,
To what may it not give birth.

A tree which upwards shall climb,
A flower with beauty or scent
May rise in its own due time;
To earth some fresh charm is lent.

Only a little sunbeam
Which pierces through the thick haze,
Yet sheds o'er the earth some gleam
Of brightness where'er we gaze.

Only a tiny streamlet
Rushing down steep mountain side,
On its way by others met
It becomes a river wide.

Only a little flower,
Yet it may gladden some heart,
Bring comfort in some dark hour,
Give new cheer to do our part.

Only a shy little bird
That sings on some quivering tree,
Yet its merry note is heard,
And it gladdens you and me.

Only a little sly sin,
So little that it's scarce seen,
It hardens the heart within,
And makes us become more mean.

Only a little habit,
Its pressure so gently begins,
Yet slowly winds its coils tight
Till it binds us firm and wins.

Only a sweet little smile,
At the time of little cost,
Has lightened many a trial
In some life sorely crossed.

Only a kind little word,
A tender clasp of the hand,
Has helped when the tempest roared
Some tired pilgrim through the land.

Only a moist little tear
Unbidden flows down the cheek,
May help hard sorrow to bear,
Give fresh cheer unto the weak.

Only a little do you say,
Yet that little may grow strong,
It may bless in many a way.
It may lead us to the wrong.

Each little that leads to life
More full, and bright, and fair,
Let us hold 'mid keenest strife,
Though heavy the load to bear.

Each little that leads to light
To guide us along our way
Let us seize with all our might,
Let us keep from day to day.

Life's littles do not despise,
We know not where they may lead,
Let us strive through them to rise
To the noblest life and deed.

DAILY SERVICE.

Not on this day alone would we
Oh Father! thus draw near to Thee,
With uplift thought, and heart, and will,
That so Thou may'st our spirit fill.

Not only in the House of Prayer
When we escape from daily care,
And thankfully our voices raise
In solemn strains of prayer and praise.

But often on life's ceaseless round
We'd strive to find some hallowed ground,
Where sometimes, 'mid the din and strife
Our thoughts soar towards the higher life.

Not always on the mount can we
Thus serve Thee most acceptably,
in common duty, daily round,
Thy service may be truly found.

So Father! help us every day
To serve Thee on life's lowly way,
That so before each set of sun
More Christ-like we may each have grown.

TAKE UP THE CROSS.

TAKE up your cross and follow me
Would you my true disciples be,
From day to day it must be borne,
Though you be weary, faint, and worn.

This was the Master's dear command
To members of his chosen band,
If we his name wish still to bear
This too must be our constant care.

Take up the cross at break of day,
Though steep the path and dim the way,
Still bear it bravely, without fear,
Remembering that the Father's near.

And if amid the noonday glare
We sink beneath our load of care,
Think then of what the Master bore,
Yet fainted not in darkest hour.

When eventide at last has come,
We yearn for comfort and for home,
Then to the Master turn the heart
And learn from him the nobler part.

Think how he suffered and was strong,
Think how he triumphed over wrong,
How he denied himself that we
Might learn his followers to be.

No Calvary will us await,
No dark Gethsemane's sad fate,
Still we shall have some cross and care
Which sometimes will be hard to bear.

Take up the cross and journey on,
Nor lay it down till set of sun,
If we would hope Heaven's crown to wear
From Jesus learn Earth's cross to bear.

FOLLOW ME.

Oh Master! we would follow thee
However steep the path may be,
But on our way clouds oft arise
To hide thy footsteps from our eyes.

We cannot always hope to see
The sun shine forth most gloriously,
Nor that our course shall always lie
Where quiet waters murmur bye.

Not always through green pastures will
Our rambling footsteps linger still,
Nor will the merry birds prolong
Throughout the day their cheerful song.

If duty's call we would obey
O'er mountain steep may be our way,
O'er rushing torrent, dangerous crag,
Our weary steps we oft must drag.

Still wheresoe'er its voice may lead
To its stern call we must give heed,
Remembering 'twas our Master's way
From morning dawn till evening gray.

So when the narrow path we tread,
And dangers hover round our head,
Then Master will we think of thee,
And strive like thee faithful to be.

We'll ever keep thy cross in view,
Symbol of noblest victory too,
Thy path with thorns was often strewn,
Without some cross there'll be no crown.

So Master we will follow thee
If thou wilt still our Leader be,
In thought we'll place our hands in thine,
Let some light from thy cross e'er shine.

REST.

Oh tell me where shall rest be found ?
Rest for the weary and the worn,
Those tired with life's daily round,
And longing for a brighter morn.

Rest for the heavy laden soul
Oppressed with burdens and with care,
Yet far away from hoped for goal,
And feeling life is hard to bear.

Is it in standing idly bye ?
While others pass us on the way,
Is it in selfish plaint and sigh ?
Amid the duties of each day.

Is it in folding of the hand ?
In idle musing, thoughtless aim ;
In sauntering idly through the land
We ne'er shall gain true rest or fame.

In change of work, and toil, and care,
In loving deeds for others' weal,
In noble thoughts and earnest prayer,
These will bring with them rest most real.

To bring to God our daily task,
Howe'er imperfect it may be,
And in His sunshine then to bask,
And gain fresh light our way to see.

And when we are most weak and worn
To feel that He is then most near,
Will bring us to a brighter morn,
And give unto us rest most dear.

Oh blessed rest, oh rest most sweet,
Come thou to help us day by day,
When we most need thee then us greet,
And help us on our forward way.

NOT DEAD.

How sad the hour which comes to all
When those we love pass on from earth,
Beyond our reach, beyond our call,
Life seems to us of much less worth.

Without their sweet companionship
Our lonely way we have to tread,
No more we feel their friendly grip,
No longer are we by them led.

The vacant place by the fireside,
The voice now silent as the grave,
The pleasant smile, they still abide,
And help us often to be brave.

We cannot think of them as lost
Though now beyond our mortal sight,
They've only joined the heavenly host,
And ever live in Heaven's own light.

And often to us do they come
In holy thought, in quiet hour,
To make more sacred still the home,
And speak to us with quickening power.

We cannot think of them as dead
Who still live on in deed and thought,
God grant us in their steps to tread,
Till we His perfect will have wrought.

PATIENCE.

We ask for patience, Father dear!
Throughout the daily round of life,
To help us when our way's not clear,
To keep us calm 'mid angry strife.

Not always will stern duty's path
Through pastures green our footsteps lead,
Sometimes we must walk on in faith
Though spirits faint, and feet may bleed.

Bright hopes that lighted morning hour
May sometimes fade ere noonday glare,
Too much we boasted of our power,
And then we're filled with anxious fear.

How often as at set of sun
We ponder o'er the day then past,
We feel how little we have done
And that its hours have fled too fast.

At every step upon our road
Sweet patience! we have need of thee
To help us bravely bear our load,
And faith's bright lining clearly see.

Compared with God's eternal calm
How fitful are our feverish ways,
Sweet patience bring us healing balm,
More peaceful make our passing days.

We patience need to sow our seed,
And then to wait for harvest time,
To faithful be to lowly deed,
When steep our path, to upward climb.

God's mills oft seem so slow to grind
To our expectant eager soul,
Yet in the end we e'er shall find
It leads most surely to His goal.

Calm patience! come our brow to cool,
To lay to rest our anxious fears,
Within us have most perfect rule,
And turn to smiles our flowing tears.

And when our journey through the land
Most tedious seems, each step we take
Stretch out a gentle, helping hand
To lead us for sweet pity's sake.

So lowly virtue with us go
Throughout our daily, weekly round,
Help us to conquer every foe,
That faith, hope, love in us abound.

THE LIFTED CLOUD.

Over the vale a thick mist lay
Which hid the landscape from my sight,
Through its dim light all things looked gray,
There seemed no gleam of heavenly light.

Yet as I gently went along
The clouds seemed silently to lift,
The birds sang merrily their song,
My path looked brighter through the rift.

So is it on the earthly way
The future is unknown, unseen,
Yet as I journey day by day
Some kind hand gently lifts the screen.

However rough my path may be
Still onwards God e'er safely leads
O'er mountain height, or stormy sea ;
His ceaseless love supplies my needs.

It's well that I can never see
What lies before me on the way,
The future's all a mystery
That I unravel day by day.

That it has ever in its hand
Something of marvel or surprise
To lure me through this wondrous land,
To help towards nobler heights to rise.

So trustfully I journey on,
Nor ask what lies before to see,
But strive that God's will may be done,
Yes, step by step's enough for me.

Thus fleeting cloud that dims my way
You too may have some use for me,
You will not always round me stay
But lift that I my way may see.

THE VOICE OF GOD.

What is this stern, clear voice
That often speaks within,
Bidding me to rejoice
Whene'er I pass bye sin.

When dangers hover nigh
That bids me look above,
And feel my Father nigh
With His strong arms of love.

Whene'er my path is dim,
I scarce know where to tread,
It bids me draw near Him,
And so by Him be led.

When duties I have done
That sorely taxed my strength
It whispers then "well done,"
That rest shall come at length.

When steep the way of life
And I am faint and worn,
Amid conflicting strife
It speaks of brighter morn.

When dear friends leave my side,
And I feel very lone,
It says, though sorely tried,
God loves me as His own.

It is the voice of Heaven
Which speaks within my heart,
And has to me been given
That I may choose God's part.

At morn, at noon, it speaks
To point out duty's way,
At eventide it makes
Me peaceful, after day.

I cannot from it roam
Where'er I go or stay,
It makes in me its home,
And must have perfect sway.

Oh Voice of God e'er speak
In accents strong and clear,
Make me the good to seek,
Make me to God draw near.

MY BABY BOY.

Jesus took a little child and set him in the midst of them.

Across the ages ever comes
This blessed saying of the Christ
Within these earthly homes of ours
A little child shall oft be placed
To teach, to lead us, and to guide,
And closer to each other bind.
And so, to-day, within this home,
In fulfilment of ancient word,
A little child has gently come
From out the vast and deep unknown
As token of Our Father's love.
So sweet, so helpless, and so weak,
A type of purest innocence.

This precious one to us is sent
To bind more close the ties of love
And consecrate this earthly home
With love most sacred and divine.
Oh little one to us now lent
As pledge of our united love
And make more glad this earthly home,
Be thou a link in chain divine
To knit us closer on life's way.
Make us more loving, tender, true,
And lead us gently day by day
Up, up the mystic stairs of Time.

RONALD.

I HAVE a Baby Boy
And Ronald is his name.
He is so very small
That some him Tiny call.
Yet it is passing strange
His appetite's so great
That oft it's difficult
His needs to satisfy.
A little timepiece too
He seems to have within,
Which seldom is too slow,
But often is too fast ;
And if one minute late
His food does seem to be
He so soon lets us know
He must not be forgot.
Some roguish ways has he

For such a tiny boy
Which often make me smile,
E'en when they try me most.
In early morn he wakes
Always at the same time
When I incline for sleep.
With his great wondering eyes
He ever looks around
And cries that we may know
Attention must be given.
Then in his childish way,
By speech we do not know,
Some little tales he tells.
Oh baby, baby dear,
Whence have they come to you?
Are they some little dream
Out of the vast unknown
Which came to you in sleep?
Has your brain been at work
When it should restful be?
All this you cannot tell.
Only this do I know

I like to hear your tales
When you choose them to tell,
E'en though in early morn
When I asleep should be.
And soon the time will come
When, through the livelong day,
Your prattle I shall hear
Rejoicing me alway.

MY CAT TINY.

My bonnie cat Tiny I name,
Yet if you e'er saw him
You'ld wonder how his name first came,
It must have been a whim.

But when it was to him first given
He was so very small,
'Twas a mistake, to own I'm driven,
He now has grown so tall.

Under a basket we put him
To see what he would do,
To tease him so now seems a sin,
He did so scratch and mew.

But now he's grown so big and sleek,
He seems not the same pet
That was a kitten small and weak,
His ways are now so set.

How soft and silken is his coat,
How beautiful his fur,
We cannot help but on him dote
Whenever he does pur.

In early morn he oft goes out
To see what he can catch,
He likes to hear the birds about,
But they're for him a match.

For as he waits, and watches too,
And thinks he'll them surprise,
Oh then there is a great to do
As upwards the birds rise.

They fly about from bush to bush
And chirp their little song,
Oh he would like at them to rush
But still he knows it's wrong.

And then throughout the quiet day
He likes to lie and sleep,
It matters little what you say
On hearth or chair he'll keep.

And when at last he does awake
He loves to stretch full length,
Oh what a fuss he then does make,
So full of joy and strength.

A glad life Tiny 'tis for you,
So free from anxious care,
When hungry, thirsty, if you mew,
You're fed with fondness rare.

A pet you always will remain,
I love to have you near,
So long as you with us will deign
To live, you will be dear.

So daily as I homeward come
Still wait in hall for me,
And when at night I cease to roam
Come say good night to me.

MY DOG DON.

I HAVE a dog whose name is Don,
So fond is he of play
He's always ready for a run,
And sometimes runs away.

His coat is of a tawny brown
Mingled with sable black,
So soft it is, like silken down,
Whene'er you stroke his back.

His eyes so quick they are of sight,
His legs so swift to run,
To me he's ever a delight,
He is so full of fun.

His bushy tail he holds upright
As he speeds on his way,
But if he should receive a fright
It hangs down all the way.

He's of a very social turn,
And many friends has, that
Whene'er he meets them he does yearn
To stop and have a chat.

It matters not what be the breed,
Or colour e'en, or size,
Of these he takes but little heed,
He sniffs, and barks, then flies.

With some he may most friendly seem.
He stops and says 'Good Morn,'
And then his countenance fair beams
As to the manner born.

With others he just merely stays,
And curtly sniffs and looks,
'You're not my sort,' he promptly says,
Then runs to other nooks.

One morning on the usual way
He met so many friends,
I had not time with him to stay,
And thought he'd make amends.

But very much to my surprise
He did not o'ertake me,
And on my homeward path my eyes
Nowhere could doggie see.

When many, many hours had passed
Two boys then came to say
That Don had reached the mill at last,
And at its door now lay.

So the poor dog knew all the way
That I wished him to take,
He thought I in the mill would stay,
He'd watch there for my sake.

Oh doggie! though you oft have brought
Me trouble with some trick,
Your watching has me something taught,
It touched me to the quick.

Oh naughty Don! I tried to say,
But still my heart did fail,
His faithfulness had won its way
As he now wagged his tail.

And so I hope for many a day
Don still will be my friend,
And follow me upon my way
Until his journey's end.

RONALD.

I WONDER what the path will be
His tiny feet will have to tread,
For life is full of mystery,
And we can never see ahead.

For like a pilgrim he is here,
With sandals and with staff in hand,
To journey whether far or near,
Across a wondrous, unknown land.

What blessings line his onward way,
What sorrows come to make him sad,
What burdens bear from day to day,
How many joys will make him glad.

What sweet surprises come to him
As patiently he goes his way,
From out the great unseen, so dim,
We do not know, we cannot say.

Where will the path of duty lead?
Will it be rugged, hard, and steep?
Whate'er it be 'twill patience need,
His wandering feet to steadfast keep.

Will success shine upon his way,
Or failure grim his courage cool,
Will flowers sweet brighten each day,
Will duty, love, his actions rule?

Oh God! the future is unknown,
We see not what its path may be,
But through life's course we Thee would own,
And leave the future all to Thee.

This life is such a wondrous gift,
For which we owe all thanks to Thee,
For all we would our souls uplift,
And strive to live most worthily.

Be with this little one, we pray,
A precious gift unto us given,
Oh lead him safely day by day
Along life's mystic way to Heaven.

And grant that he in grace may grow,
In sweetness and in virtue too,
So long as he remains below
To stern duty may he be true.

THE

INTERNATIONAL UNITARIAN CONFERENCE,

BUDA-PEST, SEPTEMBER 6, 1896.

Lines suggested by the Service in the Unitarian Church, Buda-Pest, Sunday, September 6th.

From differing lands we gather here
To voice Our Father's love and praise,
To feel His Spirit still more near,
In thankfulness our hearts to raise.

In varying speech we worship now,
Yet to each other we are bound,
From heart to heart love's currents flow,
Which makes us feel it's holy ground.

Father! be with us as we meet,
Touch Thou our hearts with sacred fire,
And as we one another greet
To holier heights may we aspire.

Our fathers Thou hast safely brought
Through many a trying fiery hour,
Still by their children be Thou sought,
Still speak to them with quickening power.

Now as our spirits soar above
May we oh God in Thee be one,
One in the fellowship of love,
One in the following of Thy Son.

THE

BI-CENTENARY OF BANK STREET CHAPEL,

BOLTON, OCTOBER 17 AND 20, 1896.

Lines suggested and read as a Second Lesson at the Morning Service, on Sunday, October 17, 1896.

Two hundred years have come and gone
Since first our fathers worshipped here,
And though their life work's long since done,
Their memory still we hold most dear.

To earnest search for Light and Truth,
To service pure of God and man,
For highest thoughts unfettered growth,
This was their spirit through life's span.

No grievous fetters they impose
On those who after them shall come,
The better part we think they chose
To leave truth free to find its home.

For this their fathers' church they leave,
To duty, conscience to be true,
Practise they must what they believe,
No other course could they pursue.

And as to-day we here do meet
Before this sacred shrine most dear,
We'll pray Heaven's blessing may us greet
As now we shed the grateful tear.

The sacred trusts to us once given
May we still keep unbroken, free,
To freedom, truth, to God and Heaven
Our noblest powers devoted be.

So on this bi-centenary day
Upon the hallowed past we'll muse,
Father! be with us now we pray,
And help us e'er Thy will to choose.

By thought of faithful men and true
Who loved and served their Master here
May we be stirred God's work to do,
And to Heaven's spirit to draw near.

MEMORIES OF THE PAST.

Ye memories of the sacred past
That often haunt me through the day,
Beneath your spell time flies so fast,
Yet hallow you life's common way.

Sweet memories of the hallowed place
Where we were born, or went to school,
And many a dear and tender face
Who strove our wayward wills to rule.

Memories too of the place where we
First learned we had some work to do
In this wide world, wherein we see
To self and God each must be true.

And forth we went with spirits bold,
Not fearing then to stand alone,
But trusting we the world might mould,
And make its glories all our own.

Memories of many a lovely spot
'Mid Nature's beauties where we strayed,
Which happier made our daily lot,
And foolish fears to rest oft laid.

Memories too of the place where we
First learned to stand or walk alone,
And longed the wondrous world to see,
And felt we had a work our own.

Memories of the sacred fane
Where, on the rest day of the week,
We went in search of heavenly gain,
But oft alas it failed to seek.

Memories of many a friend most dear
Whose tender helpfulness and love
Oft made us feel that Heaven was here,
Rather than in some realm above.

Memories of Mother, Father too,
Who gently led us by the hand,
And longed that we God's work might do;
A happy, joyous pilgrim band.

But now their place is vacant here,
While we a little longer stay,
Their memories make this earth more dear,
And help us on our heavenward way.

Memories of heights that we have won
With aching hearts and bleeding feet,
Of loving deeds that we have done,
Of friends we can no longer greet.

Of ideals once born within
And fondly hoped that we might reach,
Alas! how fruitless was our aim,
They lie as ruins on life's beach.

Sometimes we saw the higher truth,
The nobler duty, loftier aim,
And went forth with the strength of youth
Hoping that we might gain some fame.

But life's cares often pressed so sore
That 'mid its ceaseless toil and strife
This loftier vision clouded o'er,
And then we chose the lower life.

The sun sinks in the golden west,
And through the night is lost to sight,
Oft seems its afterglow the best
As we gaze on the westering light.

So golden memories of the past
Be near to hallow every day,
A tender radiance o'er life cast,
And glorify life's common way.

THE EASTERN QUESTION, 1897.

What means this thunder in the air?
This clang of arms and fire of gun.
Why hangs the war cloud heavily?
Is the war fiend at large again,
And flows its hideous stream of blood?
Do men's worst passions riot run?
Do they lie stricken on the field?
And thousand homes now mourn the loss
Of husbands, fathers, and of sons.
Oh! Mighty God! stretch forth Thine arm
And lay the fiendish warriors low.
Avenge Thine own, and strive to make
Thy purposes to ripen fast,
For lo, Thy thoughts are thoughts of peace.
Teach men to feel they are not here
To slaughter fellowmen like beasts.
Ye boasted concert of the Powers,

Why halt ye so long on your course, ?
While barbarous hordes of Turkish rule
Run riot o'er the plains of Greece,
E'er spreading ruin in their train.
'Tis not for selfish ease and pomp,
Nor yet for vain glory and greed
Your greatness now has come to you.
Stay then at once these barbarous hordes.
Bring peace where only strife prevails,
Speak firm the word and it is done,
Turkey will surely sheathe the sword.
And you mighty Powers so proud
Teach barbarous nations that by peace,
And peace alone true greatness comes.
All sheathe your swords and strive for peace,
And in one glorious brotherhood
Unite for peace, and peace will reign,
And bring therewith happy content.
So will God's holy will be done,
And His Son's Kingdom nearer come.

THE DIAMOND JUBILEE,

JUNE, 1897.

In every Briton's heart be joy
To-day throughout this sea-girt land,
From east to west, from north to south,
For all of every rank and class,
Both old and young, both rich and poor
Think well of our Belovèd Queen.
So on her Diamond Jubilee
We'll lay aside our work, and play.
In varying festive ways we'll meet
And pray God's blessing on her rest,
And on the land o'er which she reigns.
Victoria we will think of you,
So full of wisdom and of years,
Of sympathy with all that's good.
Full sixty years have you been spared
To reign o'er this our native land

In righteousness, beneficence.
You share our joys and sorrows too,
And oft from out your royal heart
There flows the sympathetic tear.
'Tis said uneasy lies the head
That's called upon to wear a crown.
Victoria our Empress Queen
Can say that she is happy still
Since faithful e'er to duty's call.
She reigneth not by point of sword
But by affection's loyal sway.
Unique in English history's page
A royal reign so long and good.
What changes therein have been wrought?
What all-round progress has been made?
History alone can clearly tell
Of sweeter manners, purer laws,
Of right that's triumphed over wrong,
Of evil conquered, good enthroned,
Of wider knowledge, kindlier will
Which help to make one brotherhood.
So on this Diamond Jubilee

We'll lay aside all weary toil.
We'll sheathe the sword and sigh for peace.
With all throughout the land we'll join
And wish our Queen the highest good.
And for God's blessing we will pray
Upon our country and our Queen.

GOD LEADS.

God leads us on from day to day,
Though rough our path and steep our way,
Yes it is He who leads us on
Along life's way.

Sometimes it's where green pastures lie,
Or where the still waters glide bye,
Still it is He who leads us on
Along life's way.

Sometimes o'er moor, and fen, and crag,
O'er mountains steep where our steps drag,
Still He does safely lead us on
His chosen way.

Sometimes our way is bright and clear,
And sweet flowers on each side appear,
Then its His smile that leads us on,
And smoothes our way.

Or dark clouds gather overhead,
And we scarce know where we must tread,
Still through the cloud God leads us on
The upward way.

Oh Father! we will trust in Thee,
And quiet, hopeful, thankful be,
Since Thou wilt safely lead us on
The way to Thee.

And when our work on earth is done,
There comes to us the set of sun,
Still near us be to lead us on
Safe home to Thee.

THE CLOUD WITH THE LINING.

It was a calm and peaceful night,
The sun was setting in the west,
I saw no more his brilliant light,
All nature wished to go to rest.

A quiet seemed to hover round
As nightly shadows o'er me spread,
No more I heard earth's busy sound,
No longer saw man's hurrying tread.

And as I gazed towards western sky
A great dark cloud seemed to stand out
Just like a mountain towering high,
So real it was hard to doubt.

In fancy I did try to climb
Its grassy slopes and rocky sides,
To raise myself to purer clime
Where nothing the wide prospect hides.

Then as the night breeze blew so loud
There came a change of form and light,
Reminding me it was but cloud
Which merged in darkness of the night.

But still behind this towering height
A radiant fire could yet be found
Which, 'mid the gathering shades of night,
Lighted the mountain sides all round.

Such glowing tints of red and gold
Which artist brush could scarce portray,
These made the outlines still more bold
Than e'en the clear light of the day.

And so this mighty cloud it seems
Was clearly lighted from behind,
The glowing tints of the sun's beams
Impressed its beauty on my mind.

How oft upon our earthly way
Dark clouds arise we fear to face,
Yet as we meet them day by day
We pass them bye with quickening pace.

At last we find there are but few
But have some shining light behind,
For every cloud we feel, 'tis true,
Has some bright lining we must find.

So though weeping be through the night
We'll trust that joy will come at morn,
That God will give fresh strength and light,
That new hopes will in us be born.

WHO IS MY FRIEND?

Who is my friend? It is not he
That ever seeks to flatter me
By honeyed word, or pleasant smile
Which he believes not all the while.

Who is my friend? It cannot be
He whose heart's full of jealousy,
And watches every step I take
Lest I more progress than he make.

Nor can it even the rich be
Who aim to make much use of me,
And only care for me so far
As I will help their course to steer.

He is my friend my faults does know,
And courage has them me to show,
Who sees my weakness, yea my sin,
And strengthens me without, within.

Who, full of love, yet sternness too,
Helps me my course to start anew,
Bids me my cherished sin forsake,
To duty's noblest call awake.

Who, when success shines on my way,
And I grow prosperous day by day,
Shields me amid temptation's hour,
Reminds me of the Higher Power.

Who joys with me when I am glad,
And comforts me when I am sad,
And when I sink beneath life's load
E'er helps me on my onward road.

Who points me to the higher truth
Which men profess to love, forsooth,
Who leads me on the heavenward road
Which brings me glimpses of my God.

Who watches me with loving gaze
However devious be my ways,
With tender hand-clasp, pleasant smile,
Helps me safe over many a stile.

Who wipes the tear-drops from my eyes
Which from grim sorrows oft arise,
And cares for me in all my care,
Helps me too many a burden bear.

My Father! such friends give to me,
May I of them more worthy be,
And oh! be Thou my constant Friend,
To do Thy will be my chief end.

MARY'S GIFT.

Oh loving soul that bring'st thy gift
And lays it at thy Master's feet,
Does it seem small? Only a box
That is with spikenard ointment filled.
'Tis all. But thou canst give no more,
Yet this how gladly thou dost bring
To him who is so dear to thee.
And he accepts it graciously
As if worth more on that account,
For in his sight the widow's mite
Is worth more than king's richest gift
Because she gives to him her all.
The box thou break'st, the ointment pours
So lovingly upon his feet,
And lo! its fragrance fills the place.
Ah foolish one! some of them said,
How great the waste which thou hast made.

Three hundred pence this might have brought
Which to the poor could have been given.
Oh hard of heart and weak of faith.
Why speak you thus to me, I pray?
The gift thou bringest to a friend
Should not be worthless to thyself,
Else it be not a gift of grace,
And is not worth the name of gift
Unless thy heart be in it too.
And so the Master also thought
And Mary's gift immortal made.
Let her alone, the Master said,
In this hath she done what she could.
Yes, Mary, now we understand
What brought thee to thy Master's feet
With wish to look into his face,
And listen to his every word.
Some subtle influence went forth
Into his nearest followers' hearts
Which made them feel that they would give
All that they had, their life for him.
We sometimes wish we then had lived

And listened to his wondrous words,
And felt his touch upon our head
Laid tenderly with blessings deep.
We cannot bring our gift of love,
Like Mary, lay it at his feet.
We cannot break the ointment box
And pour it tenderly o'er him.
We cannot look up in his face
Or listen to his helpful words.
But still he lives, though beyond sight.
His words yet linger in our ears,
His name we can take on our lips,
His memory cherish in our hearts,
The cause for which he lived and died
We can still try to make our own.
If in his spirit we e'er live,
And his disciples strive to be,
'Twill be an offering unto him
Worth more than all else we could give.
So as we read this tale of old,
How Mary served her Master well,
How she the box of ointment brake

And poured its treasures on his feet,
Thus precious comfort to him brought
And showed her faith and trust in him
By pouring out her heart's true love,
Its spirit shall sink in our hearts
And teach how we can love and serve.

THE OTHER SHORE.

At night I stood on the sea shore
And saw the sun set in the west,
And when I could see him no more
The busy world seemed all at rest.

But still I knew he had not gone;
On other lands he shone again,
And though his work might then seem done
Those other lands had waiting lain.

Yet as I looked across the sea
A crimson band of light did stretch,
Which seemed to link him still to me
As I then stood upon the beach.

I stood upon the busy pier
And saw the waters ebb and flow,
I watched the people gather there
To see the vessels come and go.

There was one seemed about to sail
For a far distant land and shore,
And some watched there whose hearts did fail
As she took friends they'd see no more.

For long they stood upon the pier,
And watched the vessel from them sail,
And then there came the silent tear
As from their sight she now did fail.

Too often on the earthly way
These partings come from those we love,
Reminding us how short life's day,
And that our true home is above.

Yet might it not be though they left
Dear friends behind they see no more,
In the new land towards which they drift
Old friends would greet them on the shore.

Some who in those days long gone bye
Have left the old world for the new,
To found another home to try
Round which some new-born hopes might grow.

So thus these voyagers might be
A link between the new and old,
Those left would oft look o'er the sea,
Those gone before think of the old.

And so when our dear friends are called
To pass o'er death's mysterious sea,
We think that they have only sailed
To some new land we hope to see.

They've simply journeyed on before;
When the call comes for us to sail
They're watching, waiting on the shore,
In trust that we shall not them fail.

So thus we see there is some link
Which binds the two worlds into one,
And though our hearts may sometimes sink
Whene'er we feel we're left alone,

Yet when we reach the other shore
It will not very lonely seem,
Since some loved ones have gone before,
And we've oft been there in our dream.

THE RACE OF LIFE.

We've all a race to run
From morn till set of sun,
E'en from our day of birth
Until we leave the earth.
Each day with renewed strength
We start another length.
We must not idly lie,
Nor linger with a sigh,
Lest some one take our place
And so we lose our race.
The course is short with some,
Soon seems the end to come,
Others still longer run
Before their work is done.
Though short or long it be
Most ever come to see
There's some work still undone
When they their course have run.

Sometimes the way is steep,
Our steps we must plant deep
That we slip not again,
And thus no fresh ground gain.
Sometimes the way is dark,
Faint light seems it to mark,
Yet still must we press on
For fear of set of sun.
If smooth the path may be
And very clear to see,
And flowers spring on its banks,
Then heartfelt be our thanks.
But loiter we must not
Though easy be our lot.
E'er onwards must we press
And strive the world to bless.
Our goal still forward lies,
We must there turn our eyes.
Aside each burden lay
That hinders on the way,
Each weight that holds us down,
Each sin ere it has grown.

That we more surely run
Our race ere day is done.
With patience must it be,
Then we more clearly see
Where we each foot must place,
Our path more clearly trace.
And as we forwards go
Strive e'er good seed to sow.
Alone we are not here
So we've no cause to fear,
Sweet voices lure us on
From those who've the race run,
For we are compassed round
By witnesses. They've found
The path of duty best,
It leads to heavenly rest.
And one there is we know
Who ran this race below.
He tarried not, but went
Straight on, to duty bent.
Naught could turn him aside,
A martyr's death he died,

And from his heavenly home
He bids us onwards come.
His words like music sound,
His spirit hovers round.
Jesus can we forget
How great to thee our debt.
God's well-beloved Son
Faithful the race hath run,
And shown to us the way
To Heaven's more perfect day.
Leader on life's highway,
To follow thee we'll pray,
And as we run our race
Towards thee will turn our face.
We'll ever think of thee
And strive like thee to be.
Thus guide us, lead us on,
Until our race is run,
And comes the dawn of day
When shadows flee away.
At home we then shall be,
More of Our Father see.

THE QUIET HOUR.

Blest hour of holy, quiet thought,
That sometimes comes upon life's way,
How sweet when we've some battle fought
To shelter 'neath your gentle sway.

You visit us at early morn
When we from silent night have come,
New hopes within us then are born
As we go forth life's ways to roam.

Sometimes 'mid noonday glare and heat
You come to us with soothing power,
Awhile we shelter on our beat,
Refreshed march on till sunset hour.

You come to us at close of day
When work is done, ere sleep is nigh,
That we may ponder o'er our way,
Our penitential tears dry.

Oh sacred hour! whene'er you come,
At morn, at noon, or eventide,
A welcome guest be in our home,
And leave some blessing to abide.

Bring unto us fresh faith and hope,
Bright visions of a better time,
Then strengthened with life's claims to cope
We higher rise towards sunnier clime.

Oh quiet, peaceful resting space,
A holy Sabbath in the soul,
Through you may we some pathway trace
To lead us nearer Heaven's goal.

DURHAM CATHEDRAL.

Upon a steep and rocky height
Against which storms for long have beat
This old Cathedral proudly stands,
Object of interest far and near.
Around its base flows River Wear
Through wooded slopes of graceful trees
On which Autumn her seal had set
With many a rich and radiant hue.
Oft round this stately pile we walk
With measured tread and thoughtful mien.
We scan the tombstones which e'er tell
The common frailty of mankind.
Some venerable now with age,
The name and age we can't depict;
Some modern too as yesterday.
Bishop and clergy, scholar too
Here lie at rest, their work now done.

By Norman arch we enter now
Through large and truly ancient door,
With antique knocker weird and grim
Which criminals oft used to sound
That asylum they here might find
As they from justice sought to flee.
Tradition states, by night and day
Two monks e'er watched and slept in turn
That one the door could then unlock
Whene'er the well-known sound was heard.
As at the western end we stand
And gaze full length through nave and choir,
At east windows with glass so rich,
And roof so lofty and so bold,
With massive Norman pillars too,
At marble pulpit, lectern, screen,
In wondering rapture we are lost.
Behind the choir then do we stand
On ancient shrine, now hollow worn
By pilgrim feet, which here have come
To worship at St. Cuthbert's shrine.
Here too we look upon the place

Where formerly nine altars stood
Above which stained glass windows rose
Before which men oft paid their vows.
Oh ancient, stately, lordly pile!
So massive, grand, yet graceful too,
What mighty changes have been wrought
Since William of Saint Carilef
Built you seven centuries ago;
And venerable Bede was laid
In Cuthbert's coffin 'neath your roof.
Generations in their turn have come,
As surely too have passed away,
Yet 'mid so much that fleeting is
You still remain, so firm and strong,
E'er gathering grace with added years.
Throughout the circling year each day
Your bell tolls twice for worship here.
The swelling organ too is played,
And hymn and chant and anthem sung,
And praise is heard and prayer intoned.
The old have come that they may gain
Some peace 'mid lengthening shadows dim

To comfort them on their lone way.
And here the young have gathered too
That so God's grace they may receive
To consecrate their coming days,
And so their path more clearly see.
And toiling men and women too
Have here their heavy burdens brought,
And touched by holy hymn and prayer,
And thought of God, and Christ, and man,
With memories of the hallowed past,
And bright hopes for the coming time,
Have felt their burdens lightened, and
Once more gone forth with strengthened faith
To common round and daily task.
So sacred pile, still surely stand,
Whatever changes yet may come,
To point men's thoughts from earth to heaven,
Symbol of faith, and hope, and love.
'Tis true the creeds that men here say
I can't repeat or understand.
When name of Christ is glibly said
To eastern shrine I cannot bow.

Some simpler thought of God I want,
Of Christ and duty, earth and heaven
To help me on my daily course.
Still what to me perplexing is
May wake in other hearts the seed
Of noble effort, holy thought;
To tasks of noblest duty lead.
I will not stay to mock or scoff
The creed I feel I do not need.
So peace to all who come to you
To worship in sincerity.
While winter storms around you blow
And summer suns upon you shine,
And you remain still, men to lure
To holy and to reverent thought,
Heaven's richest blessing you surround.

THE QUIET BAY.

I stood upon the wave-beat shore
Which lay within a quiet bay,
I heard man's busy voice no more,
'Twas far from his oft crowded way.

Above the sun was shining bright,
The clouds were floating gently bye,
Some merry birds took to their flight
Singing so sweetly in the sky.

No sound of spindle or of loom
Disturbed the quiet of this place,
Here holy thoughts had ample room,
And seemed to speak with sweetest grace.

I watched the placid waters move
As wave by wave they nearer drew,
E'er ruled by some Great Power above,
So full of speech and music too.

The little waves came rolling in,
Then peacefully they drew away,
How surely their way they e'er win,
Some certain law they must obey.

And yet it is not always so
If the wind sweeps across the sea,
The waves now softly come and go,
Then lashed in fury they will be.

With fearful strength they gather near
And burst in anger on the shore,
They fill the heart with anxious fear
Which listens to their awful roar.

So thus it seems in nature's plan
Both storm and calm alike are found;
But over all is One who can
After the storm make calm abound.

And so it is in daily life,
There come sometimes calm resting days
When we are free from anxious strife,
And it seems easy to give praise.

The call of duty leads us on
Gently along some pleasant way,
Upon us shines the cheery sun,
We wish life was one such long day.

And then some sudden storm may spring
Which calls us from our peaceful way ;
There will come storms and angry strife,
The sun too shine on many a day.

But after winter comes the spring
When all is fresh, and bright, and clear,
So it may be life's storms will bring
A calm most sweet, a peace most dear.

So come to us from day to day
Some storm or calm, whate'er it be,
We'll feel God leads us on our way,
And strive in all His will to see.

BOLTON ABBEY.

In quiet spot 'mid lovely dale
Where peaceful Wharfe goes murmuring bye
The Abbey still in ruins stands.
Seven centuries have passed away
Since Augustinian monks came here
To make their home, and live their life
Of holy worship, thought, and deed,
Then left behind their stately home,
Their quiet church, and resting-ground
Wherein those who their race had run
So peacefully at rest were laid.
And as we stand and gaze around
On beauty rich of hill and dale,
Of flowing river, lowing kine,
Of lofty tree and graceful fern ;
As we inhale the fragrant air
And feast on beauty all around,

No more we wonder monks came here
That they might plant their much-loved home.
Here, far away from busy world,
They lived their simple, holy life,
By which they thought their God to serve.
Now time has left some trace behind
In open roof and crumbling wall,
And tell-tale tombstone here and there
Which speak of those whose course is run
And now have crossed the mystic stream
Whence no wayfarer can return.
Still week by week, within some part
Roofed o'er by loving hand of man,
Have men gathered to worship God
Through the centuries ceaselessly.
The monks long since have passed away,
Nor left their name on history's page,
But the home which was dear to them
In ruins stands. Men leave their toil
To ramble to this quiet spot
And muse upon the distant past.
Oh lovely ruin! still remain

To lure men from life's busy way.
May reverent souls still guard o'er thee
To keep thee from the spoiler's hand.
Oft may men ramble round thy ruins
With reverent thought and wondering gaze,
And from the quiet, peaceful air,
And sylvan beauties spread around
Gather fresh thought, and hope, and cheer,
To help them on their onward way.

HUBBERHOLME CHURCH,

WHARFEDALE.

In lovely Wharfedale, near its head,
Far, far removed from busy world
There stands a lonely, ancient church.
The lofty moors their steep sides rear
And almost shade it from our view.
Two rough steep roads to lonely dales
Pass near, not often travelled o'er.
Not distant far from mountain source
The little Wharfe goes rippling bye.
'Tis all alone, this moorland church,
Save for the parsonage close bye,
A farmer's home, and country inn
Where, on their steep and rugged way
Both man and beast often do stop
To quench their thirst and rest their limbs.
Since early Saxon, Norman time,

Through winter storm and summer heat
This little church has been a shrine
To lead men's thoughts from earth to heaven.
O'er moorland height, down lonely vale
Have, week by week, hale farmers come
To pay their homage unto God.
Within, the Norman arches bring
Some message from the distant past.
Without, its many tombstones tell
Of those now gone from earth to heaven.
How can we gaze upon its walls,
Or even tread its moss-grown graves
Without our thoughts being drawn towards God.
What changes have been wrought since it
First reared its steeple heavenwards?
What generations come and gone
Who brought some tale of joy or woe,
Unburdened their full heart to God,
And asked of Him strength, peace, and joy.
Oh lonely, ancient, moorland church!
With all my heart I bid thee speed
In thy great work of helping men.

As the weeks go so swiftly bye
May men still gather in thy walls,
And feel that God there speaks to them,
And throws fresh light upon their way
To lead them nearer still to Heaven.

THE LIGHTHOUSE.

Far, far removed from busy throng,
Upon the lonely rock or isle,
Or stern and rugged sea-girt coast
The lighthouse stands, so firm and sure.
For ages past against its base
The sea has beat with ceaseless force,
Yet still undaunted there it stands.
No crowded marts, no noisy streets
Discharge their living cargoes near.
Not oft is heard the tread of feet ;
Only the music of the waves
Disturbs the quiet of this place,
Now gentle, peaceful as can be
And playful as a little child,
Then full of stern and awful rage
When the rough winds sweep o'er their face
And drive them hurriedly before.

The lonely bird oft flies about
With plaintive cry for daily food,
Or builds its nest in rocky cleft.
The mighty vessels as they pass
Upon their wanderings to and fro,
Look to this lighthouse thankfully
To guide them in their hour of need.
Within this landmark by the sea
There lives the trusty keeper too,
With weathered face and tawny hands.
So far removed from busy world,
And thoughts of pleasure and of ease
His chief companion is the sea.
From day to day through hours of light
Some watch is kept o'er neighbouring seas,
And when the sun in west has set
And night's dark mantle veils the skies
The keeper lights the beacon lamp.
Through every night throughout the year
Steadily shines this beacon light,
Flashing its rays across the sea
To guide and warn each passing ship.

And was not Christ a beacon light?
To guide men safely on life's way
O'er crag and torrent, moor and fen.
The music of his words still lives.
They bring us comfort give us peace.
The beauty of his life still shines
And makes more bright stern duty's path.
He marked for us the truest road,
And still he points the way to God.
And cannot we be beacon lights?
Yes, we can shed some little rays
O'er earth's dark places as we go,
And help to make the world more bright.
Oh God! be this our wish, our aim,
Our constant effort and our prayer.
Give Thou us strength it e'er to do,
That like Thy Christ in olden time
We may be well beloved of Thee.

WHITBY HEAD.

Upon a headland steep and bold
Which overlooks the mighty deep
I met a woman with her child
Walking along with serious air,
Then looking steadfast towards the sea.
Near at hand an old church stood
Surrounded by large burial ground
In which men worshipped week by week.
Its tombstones told of many a life
Which in the ocean had been lost
And here had found a resting-place.
With her I chatted for a while
About the dangers of the sea.
Upon its surface wild we looked
As many a ship was passing bye;
And gazing anxiously she said,
Pointing with hand across the main,

'My sailor boy's bound on that ship
From Hartlepool to busy Thames.
While his vessel has been repaired
He has been home for nigh four weeks,
The only time since he first went
To sea, now near three years ago.
And now once more he's gone away
But if and when he may return
I do not know. I cannot say.
For seven and thirty years I've had
To do with sailors and the sea,
And now I feel it is enough.'
The vessel was far out at sea
But still the mother knew 'twas his.
She waved her hand across the sea
With anxious thought and tender heart
As if to waft him a God-speed,
Her sailor boy upon the sea.
Oh mother heart that yearneth so
After her boy, her sailor boy,
Now disappearing fast from sight.
Who caused thy heart to yearn for him

If not thy God who gave him thee ?
Do we not then in this behold
A spark from the Eternal One
Which links us to the Deity.
For as the mother loves her child
And follows him with yearning heart,
So God is Father, Mother too,
And all are children whom He loves.
Each journeys o'er the sea of life
Through storm and sunshine, mist and cloud,
But still God watches over us
With anxious thought and yearning love.
In Heaven there always beats for us
A tender, loving parent's heart
As mother for her sailor boy.

PORT ERIN.

Oh lovely bay in sunny isle
To which men come for peaceful change,
Here near thy shore I'll rest awhile,
And o'er thy rocky headlands range.

The restless waves with joy I'll watch
Advancing on the sandy shore,
And strive some healthful breeze to catch
While listening to their ceaseless roar.

Upon the tower-capped Bradda Head,
Which ever keeps strict guard o'er thee,
I'll roam about with wondering tread,
Then sit, and muse, and restful be.

The hardy, golden gorse so bright
A flowery halo spreads around,
The purple heather's my delight,
Nature's wild beauties here abound.

And as I gaze deep down below
The waters move with quickening pace,
By day they ceaseless ebb and flow,
And many a boat glides o'er their face.

Far, far away from busy world, so full
Of cares and worries here I lie,
I hear the cry of plaintive gull,
On beauty feast of sea and sky.

Against thy cliffs, so rough and steep
How long the maddening seas have beat,
A buttress firm against the deep
Which passing ships are glad to greet.

While man has lived his little life,
And generations passed away,
Thou seem'st the same beneath time's strife,
And restless ones still o'er thee stray.

So lovely bay and headland bold
That greet me on this sunny isle,
Be still a refuge from the world
Where weary souls may rest awhile.

May tired limbs and aching heart
Weighed down by earthly toil and care
Here find new strength for life's stern part,
New hopes each day's burden to bear.

PÖTZLINGBERG.

Behind the town of Linz in Austria, situated on the two banks of the River Danube, rises a hill on whose summit is a large pilgrimage church. Thither resort large crowds on Saints' days. It was the 16th of August when I was there, the Festival of the Assumption of the Virgin. One of the most important Festivals of the Catholic Church, it is kept as a public holiday; the morning being devoted to religious services, the afternoon to social enjoyment.

Upon a steep and lofty hill
That rises high behind Linz town
By which the mighty Danube flows,
There stands a large pilgrimage church
Which can be seen for miles around.
It was a warm and sunny day
In mellow Autumn's August month,
To pretty Linz we came to halt
A day or two, our tired limbs

To rest, its peacefulness to breathe.
For we had rambled far and wide
And were now on our homeward way.
It chanced to be a festive day,
A holy saints' day of the church,
When busy workers ceased to toil
And all seemed filled with other thoughts.
From many a village far and near
The peasants came in best attire.
They thronged the church's sacred floor,
Thus did their holier duty first,
Then spent their time in festive mirth.
It was a calm and mellow day
As only Autumn brings to us,
And all the country seemed to be
As if arrayed in festive garb,
So beautiful were trees and flowers,
The flowing river, sun and sky.
A richness, beauty seemed to fill
The earth as at no other time.
The peaceful afternoon had come.
The sun's first flush had sobered down.

Methought I'd climb this holy hill
And visit this old pilgrim church.
As step by step I slowly rose
Upon the steep and toilsome path
At stated intervals I came
To cross of wood, most roughly hewn,
Or sacred shrine with pictures decked,
And seat near bye, where one could rest
With some thought from the Master's life,
And gaze on beauty all around.
These were the stations of the Cross
At which the pilgrims always stopped
To rest, and have a thought of him
To whom they felt they owed so much,
Then mount again with holier strength.
At last when summit I had gained
With reverent step I then entered
The church, quietly took my place
Amongst the solemn worshippers.
In awful stillness there I sate,
And almost feared to gaze around
Lest I some silent prayer should check.

My heart was touched by what I saw.
How many knelt in solemn prayer,
To make confession of some sin,
To lift some burden from the soul
And ask for pardon and for grace,
Then rose and to the altar went
And placed some offering on the plate
And walked away with softened heart,
With holy and with reverent soul
That spoke of peace and pardon found.
On every hand around I saw
Symbols of strange mysterious faith.
I could not say the prayers they said.
I could not bow before their shrine,
Yet would I not the faith despise
Which comforted so many souls,
And lighted up the path of life
With holier thought and brighter hope.
Perchance the faith which I held not
Might lead in them to sweeter love,
And tasks of noblest duty too.
In spite that all was sadly strange

A deeper reverence filled my heart.
I felt it was good to be there,
And hoped that God would hear the prayer
Which could not but rise from my heart.
As out I came with conscience touched
Then on a rough-hewn seat I sate
And gazed upon the scene around.
And what a glorious scene it was.
Below the mighty Danube flowed
On its long journey towards the sea,
For many a mile through fertile plain,
By many a town and village too,
By lordly castle, humble cot.
By monastery, nunnery too
Where life is spent far from the world,
By vine-clad slope and golden grain.
And as I saw each pilgrim's steps
Turn slowly towards the downward path
Which led them towards the busy world
I thought, oh holy pilgrim church!
What strength and blessing you have given
To many a faint and weary soul

Oft tempest tossed and sorely tried.
For many, many centuries
Upon this summit you have stood,
Perpetual witness unto God,
Perpetual beckoner to man
To call him from low-lying care
And bid him live a life of prayer:
And through the ages yet to be
This be your constant mission still.
Within your walls may peace be brought
To many a sad and weary heart,
And comfort too and healing balm
Come unto many a sorrowing one.
May many, many heavy loads
Be lifted from the downcast soul,
And many a darkened cloud be rent
And lit behind with rainbow tints.
New thoughts of God within be born,
New views of duty, hopes of Heaven.
As from Pötzlingberg height we gaze
Upon a larger, fairer world,
So from its church may many see

Some visions bright of days to be;
Feel stirrings of diviner life.
Such were my thoughts as I went down
Into the vale with measured step,
Thankful that to this church I'd been,
Thankful for all I'd felt and seen.
And as my wandering steps turned home
The sun was setting in the west
Making the earth more hallowed seem,
Touching my heart with holier thought.

MORNING.

A NEW-BORN day is here,
The gift of love divine,
We thank Thee, Father dear,
Help us to make it Thine.

Through the dark, silent night
Thou hast watched us, and brought
Once more the morning light,
With countless mercies fraught.

A day in which to do
Some work for God and man,
To prove more faithful too
To life's ideal plan.

In which some seed to sow
Of kindness, truth, and love,
Which hour by hour may grow,
And lead to Heaven above.

Some purer thought make strong
Now struggling towards the light,
Some noble hope keep young
To make our life more bright.

A day in which to drive
Away too anxious care,
Our Master's will to strive
To do, our cross to bear.

Stern duty's voice to hear,
And better still obey,
Some lonely one to cheer,
And make more glad earth's way.

Through this day's circling round
Be near us, oh our God!
May we ever be found
Upon the heavenward road.

SATURDAY NIGHT.

Once more has come the quiet eve
That ends the busy week,
All anxious care behind we'll leave;
Our Father's blessing seek.

We hear not now the busy hum
Of spindle and of loom,
The voice of buyer, seller's dumb,
For higher thoughts we've room.

Amid conflicting noise and strife
Of daily toil and care
We oft forget that higher life
We think of in our prayer.

But now our tools we lay aside
At ending of the week,
In God's near presence to abide,
And learn His will to seek.

We lay our offering at His feet
To Whom we owe our all,
In trust He gladly will us greet,
And hear us as we call.

We know it is an offering small,
So oft we've gone astray,
Though poor we bring to Thee our all,
Oh! turn us not away.

And now throughout the darksome night
We trust ourselves to Thee,
Though dark without within be light,
May our sleep restful be.

And be the morrow to us given
Let it be free from care,
And filled with sweetest thoughts of Heaven,
Of duty, love, and prayer.

Be it a day of happy thought,
Of sacred memories too,
Whereby fresh strength to us is brought
To help us be more true.

A day to climb some lofty height
Above low-lying vale,
And catch some glimpse of vision bright
Whose glories will not pale.

We know not where to-morrow's path
May lead us on our way,
But trust that it may strengthen faith,
And prove a restful day.

So Father now we close this week
In love, and trust, and pray
That if another on us break,
'Twill lead us on Heaven's way.

EVENING.

Oh Father! o'er the weary world
The falling darkness softly comes,
The little birds their wings have furled,
And busy bee no longer hums.

A peaceful stillness seems to reign
O'er what were scenes of toil and care,
And anxious toilers seek to gain
New strength and hope life's cross to bear.

So, at the ending of the day
Our daily tasks we lay aside,
That we may halt upon life's way,
And ask Our Father us to guide.

We've oft been deaf to duty's call,
Forgotten what is Heaven's will,
Yet ceaseless bounties on us fall,
Our Heavenly Father loves us still.

Be with us through the coming night,
Father give restful slumber too,
And if again we see the light
May we Thy will more gladly do.

Be near us too throughout our life,
In joy our crown, in grief our stay,
Oh hold us safe 'mid keenest strife,
Tenderly guide us day by day,

And when at last life's curfew bell
Shall call us from our home below,
Help us to feel that all is well,
Since by Our Father's will we go.

SUNDAY EVENING.

Once more has come the quiet hour
At ending of the Sabbath-day,
With thankful hearts we'll bless that Power
Whose love has crowned us all its way.

For freedom from all earthly care,
For holy memories the day brought,
Uplifting thoughts and visions rare,
Glimpses of Heaven we have caught.

For every ray of sunny light
Which seemed more bright on this good day,
For every throb of pure delight
That helped us on our onward way.

For sacred hours of praise and prayer
In Temple raised in God's dear name,
Which brought to us some visions rare
Of Him from Whom all blessings came.

For peace and rest which seem to come
With healing to the weary soul,
For quiet in the earthly home,
For promptings towards some higher goal.

For new-born faith, and cheer, and power,
For brighter hopes of coming time
That came throughout each passing hour
To help us life's steep hill to climb.

Dear Father! at close of this day
We lay our offering before Thee,
Give us Thy blessing new, we pray,
Through night's dark hours still near us be.

And if another day we see,
Then call us to Thy service true,
Help us more faithful still to be,
Help us Thy blessed will to do.

THE HEART'S YEARN FOR GOD.

Oh Thou Unseen One! yet how near,
Our hearts yearn so for Thee,
Do Thou our simple prattlings hear
As we draw near to Thee.

Encircling us throughout the day,
Yet oft we feel Thee not,
Oh touch us, Father, now we pray,
And sanctify our lot.

Thou'rt with us in the early morn
When we awake from sleep,
New hopes within us then are born,
New vows which we must keep.

Amid the haste and stress of life
We wish thee with us still,
To cheer and guide us 'mid its strife,
To help us do Thy will.

When eventide at last has come
Daily tasks we lay down,
And hushed is the world's busy hum,
With sweet peace then us crown.

In Thy near presence we would live
At morning, noon, and night,
To Thee our noblest powers give,
And struggle for the right.

Throughout each busy, circling day
Our hearts would yearn for Thee,
Then send us not empty away,
Let us Thy glory see.

Oh Father! let us ever feel
Thy presence round our way,
And as before Thee we now kneel
Oh hear us now we pray.

NOT ALWAYS.

Not always can we trace Thy hand
Oh Father! on our daily way,
But as we journey through the land
We'll find in Thee our surest stay.

Not always can we see Thy smile,
Sometimes dark clouds shadow our head,
We patiently then wait awhile
And soon they pass, so onwards tread.

Not always can we Thy voice hear
Amid the clash and din of earth,
Still we'll go forward without fear,
And strive to make our life more worth.

Not always can we trace the thread
Of Heaven's purpose through our life,
Still Father we'll by Thee be led,
Thou'lt bring us safely through life's strife.

So Father, if dark be our way,
Thou seemest hidden from our sight,
We trust that Thou wilt clear our way
And lead us on to Heaven's light.

Oh take us gently by the hand
And speak to us in accents clear,
E'er lead us upwards till we stand
In Thy near presence, Father dear.

THE SEARCH FOR GOD.

WHERE shall we find Thee? oh our God
Who dwellest all around,
Both Heaven and Earth are Thy abode,
Yet how canst Thou be found?

Throughout our daily, weekly round
We feel the need of Thee,
That earth may seem as holy ground,
And we Thy will may see.

We need Thy strength to hold us up
When we often feel weak,
Some joys from Thee to fill our cup
When life seems rough and bleak.

To guide us safe we need Thy hand
When we know not our way,
Thy voice to lure us through the land,
Oh God! our Guide and Stay.

We need Thy smile to bring us cheer
When we are sad and lone,
Thy peace to help our cross to bear
When we to faint are prone.

Where then oh God! shall we find Thee
Whom our hearts so much need,
'Tis not in ancient lore that we
Only Thy face can see.

We see Thee in the mighty sun
Which gives us light by day,
And all the stars and paler moon
From Thee give forth some ray.

We see Thee in this wondrous earth
Of beauty, grandeur full,
Which in the reverent soul gives birth
To thoughts, hopes, wonderful.

We see Thee through the circling year;
Each season in its train
Brings to us all some message clear
From which of God we learn.

We see Thee in morn's dawning light
Which calls us forth from sleep,
We see Thee too at peaceful night,
Thou o'er us watch dost keep.

We see Thee too at mid-day hour
When sun is high in air,
Reminding us of Thy great power;
It cheers us 'mid our care.

In love of parent, child, and friend
We have some spark from Thee,
The truest love on earth may tend
To bring us nearer Thee.

But still, on God! 'tis not enough
To know Thou art around,
Our life path is so often rough,
Still nearer be Thou found.

Oh yes, we know this is not all,
We feel Thee in our heart,
We hear Thy voice in conscience's call
When we have done our part.

In every joy we see Thee too
That makes more bright our way,
And when we fail Thy will to do
Still speak within, we pray.

We always need Thy hand to feel
To hallow all our life,
Our many wounds and scars to heal;
We need Thee 'mid life's strife.

We need to trust Thou wilt teach each
As we go on our way,
That all Thy children Thee can reach
If they love, work, and pray.

Thy will we'll do, Thy voice we'll hear,
Thy hand through life we'll clasp,
Our path will then become more clear
As we Heaven's purpose grasp.

So, Father, may we ever feel
Thou art within, around,
That we reach to Thee when we kneel
In prayer. Then Thou art found.

Oh happy faith to feel God near
Along our daily walk,
And that He will our lispings hear,
And let us with Him talk.

That even when our path is dim
He's not so far away,
But as we strive to reach towards Him
He'll meet us on the way.

Then as we reach death's silent shore
And venture out to sea,
Oh may we feel Thee still the more
As home we sail to Thee.

At home, at home, oh blessed thought,
No more to lose our way,
Oh with what comfort this is fraught,
We're with God night and day.

DIVINE GUIDANCE.

FATHER! beneath Thy searching gaze
No act escapes unseen,
Thy piercing eyes search all our ways
Our hearts from vice to wean.

Our thoughts, and words, and secret sighs
Are known before their birth,
Oh may Thine ever-watchful eyes
Rest on us while on earth.

In all the varied scenes of life
Thy tender care we see,
Oh guard us 'mid stern duty's strife,
For help we come to Thee.

Oh give us grace that we may seek
Thy will in all to do,
And grant us strength that we may keep
To all that's good and true.

To duty's path with steadfast heed
May we devote our power,
To life's great work, by word and deed,
Prove faithful every hour.

And when alas! our strength decays,
Our feet then halt and stray,
Be near to guide us through earth's haze
To Heaven's eternal day.

GOD SPEAKS TO US.

God speaks to us upon life's way
Would we but hear His voice,
He speaks to us from day to day,
Ought we not to rejoice.

He speaks to us through sun and shower,
Through storm as well as calm,
Through singing bird, sweet-smelling flower,
All bring sweet, healing balm.

God speaks to us through whispering trees
With foliage bright and green,
And in the wild, tempestuous seas
His presence can be seen.

From mountains high and valleys low,
And gently-winding streams,
Some message from Him seems to flow,
Each with His goodness teems.

God speaks to us in thunder loud,
In lightning swift and clear,
We think of Him behind each cloud,
He is both far and near.

Through success which e'er seems to be
His smile upon our way,
Through failure in which we may see
He has something to say.

God speaks to us at early morn
When we arise from sleep,
To say another day is born
In which His will to keep.

God speaks to us at mid-day hour,
Amid life's heat and glare,
And when the storm clouds round us lower
He bids us not to fear.

God speaks to us at setting sun
When day is past recall,
To ask if we His will have done,
Ere we asleep do fall.

God speaks to us throughout our life,
  Would we but strive to hear
'Twould calm us 'mid life's angry strife,
  And hallow every care.

God speaks to us within our heart,
  So near He seems to be,
Oh let us never from Him part,
  In all Him hear and see.

A SAFE ANCHOR.

It was a rough and stormy day,
The wind was blowing strong,
I stood and looked across the bay
Amid an anxious throng.

Across the sky the clouds did chase
Each other very fast,
They seemed to move with quickening pace
As if time could not last.

The waters very angry were,
The waves were mountains high,
They gave to all much cause for fear
O'er vessels lying bye.

Some boats were driven here and there,
I thought they soon must sink,
While some rode proudly without fear,
Why, I began to think.

It was that some no anchor had
But simply rode at will,
The raging tempest drove them mad,
They could not remain still.

The others let an anchor down
Into the mighty deep,
It held them safe till storm had flown,
Though waves might o'er them leap.

While thus I mused, in this I saw
A parable of life,
From which some lesson I could draw
'Mid earthly toil and strife.

For in our common daily round
The storms sometimes will come,
One day sweet calm alone is found,
Our blessings then we sum.

And then storm clouds may gather o'er
When we scarce know our way,
We're lost amid the tempest's roar,
For guidance then we pray.

We must our anchor then let down
And take of God firm hold,
Until our hearts in Him have grown
And we are firm and bold.

And if within dwell faith and hope,
And love e'er reigns supreme,
Through darkness we can safely grope,
And feel life's not a dream.

Around the wildest storms may blow,
With God we're anchored sure,
'Tis His sweet will it should be so,
His will must e'er endure.

Then come what may of storm or shower
Our hands in God's we'll clasp,
Since sure that His sustaining power
Will not let go our grasp.

THE REST AND PEACE OF CHRIST.

Come unto me all ye who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

My peace I leave with you. My peace I give unto you.

YES Master we will come
That we may have your rest,
No longer will we roam,
But find your way the best.

Weary of toil and strife,
With heavy burdens pressed,
Throughout our daily life
We oft long for your rest.

'Tis not release from care
For which you bid us seek,
But strength each cross to bear,
And duty's path to keep.

Faith head erect to hold
Though dark may be the way,
Hope when the outlook's cold
To look for brighter day.

The rest that you will give
Comes from duty well done,
It helps us so to live
That we life's crown may win.

Not outward rest and peace,
Not these the Master gave,
His struggles did not cease,
Himself he did not save.

But rest from anxious thought
Which comes with inward peace,
With calm of soul 'tis brought,
And stormy passions cease.

Oh rest and peace most sweet,
The Master's promise sure,
These truly will us greet
If only we endure.

Blest solace of the sad
And helper of the weak,
Christ's promise makes all glad,
And lures us him to seek.

When faint, and worn, and weak
To Jesus we will turn,
His rest and peace to seek,
And strive from him to learn.

Master hold thou our hand,
Give us thy rest and peace,
Guide us safe o'er life's strand
Until our journey cease.

THE DIVINE WILL.

Father! help us Thy will to seek
Throughout each quickly passing day,
May we Thy laws e'er strive to keep
Along life's hard and toilsome way.

How weak we are Thou knowest well,
How soon our cruse of strength is spent,
Yet Thy voice speaks within to tell
Of guidance, strength to suppliants sent.

When darkness gathers round our way,
Or sorrow dims the light of hope,
Then, Holy Father, near us stay
To help us with life's tasks to cope.

When steep the path we have to tread
And we stand trembling at its base
By Thee we'll trustfully be led,
And do Thy will with sweetest grace.

When dangers seem to hover near,
Or on some rocky crag we stand
Dim Thou our vision lest we fear,
And safely guide us by Thy hand.

In all the blessings we receive
May we Thy love and goodness trace,
In trials which our spirits grieve
Still strive to see some angel face.

Amid our common daily round
Oh help our thoughts towards Thee to soar
In prayer, that strength may e'er be found,
And faith to trust Thee more and more.

CLOUDS.

I LAY upon the mountain top
And watched the clouds pass bye,
What message, thought I, do you drop,
As here at peace I lie.

I know you are not sent in vain,
Though short may be your life,
You oft are charged with precious rain
Which falls with blessings rife.

How varied too your colours are
From morn till close of day,
The sun illumines you from far,
Then scatters you away.

Sometimes so large, and stern, and dark,
So full of awe and fear,
Then bright and joyous as a lark
With notes so sweet and clear.

Sometimes you swiftly cross the sky
In ever-varying shape,
Sometimes in stately majesty
The firmament you drape.

Sometimes like mountains high you stand
Whose sides, in thought, I climb,
You hint of some more glorious land
Beyond this world and time.

At early morn and close of day
Your outlines are so bold
With many a glowing, gorgeous ray
Of crimson and of gold.

You sometimes shade the path I take
That I scarce see my way,
In faith a fresh track I must make,
And hope for brighter day.

But when you cast your shade around,
And make my path more dim
'Tis that when dangers stern surround
I'm safely led through them.

Beneath the full glare of the sun
I soon should faint and tire
And sink before the day was done,
In vain could I mount higher.

I know behind the darkest shades
The sun somewhere still shines,
And when you pass the dimness fades,
With good my path God lines.

Oh clouds! in mercy are you sent
To lure me on my way,
You seem to come as blessings lent,
However brief your stay.

So as on mountain height I rest
There cometh clouds and sun,
It's hard to choose which is the best,
God's will by each is done.

In trust I'll fix my gaze on high
For I feel God is there,
And gather strength, as here I lie,
For cloud or the sun's glare.

Thus, passing clouds, speed on your way,
More varied make the sky,
Fulfil your mission day by day,
And lead my thoughts on high.

ANOTHER BIRTHDAY.

ANOTHER birthday, Father dear,
This morning greets me on my way,
Thy sweetest whisper let me hear,
And feel Thee near me through this day.

So often 'mid the strife and din
Of daily conflict, toil, and care,
I strive my selfish way to win,
And lose myself amid earth's glare.

I need some special day and time
To lead me from low self away,
That I some secret mount may climb
And learn to watch, and wait, and pray.

And such a day has come at length
Which summons me to serious thought,
When I may halt and gather strength,
And think of battles I have fought.

As on this quiet height I stay
And see the path that I have trod,
How many joys have crowned each day,
How safely I've been led of God.

Strength has been given my work to do,
Duties to fill the passing hours,
Joys have sprung up on my path too,
And lined it as with wayside flowers.

Yet, sometimes too, the clouds have come,
And made my path seem dark and drear,
God's mercies then I try to sum,
His whisperings I try to hear.

And then the clouds have rolled away,
The bright sun has once more been seen,
I found the darkness did not stay,
That joys spring up where sorrow's been.

How often I my vows forgot,
How often wandered from Thy sight,
Yet Thou hast me forgotten not,
But led me on towards clearer light.

Another year I bring to Thee
With every failure and mistake,
Oh Father! pity, pardon me,
If only for sweet pity's sake.

I lay it sadly at Thy feet
Since I its course can ne'er retrace,
How much of chaff instead of wheat,
Look down on me with tenderest grace.

So as upon the past I muse
And see where I have missed my way,
Help me anew the right to choose,
Still lead me onwards day by day.

If I should try to see before
The path Thou wishest me to tread,
I know it's wisely clouded o'er,
That step by step by Thee I'm led.

So Father, take me by the hand,
And lead me nearer day by day,
Though rough and stony be the land,
And I grow weary by the way.

Yet keep me ever by Thy side,
Nor suffer me from Thee to roam,
In Thy near presence I'll abide
Until at last Thou lead'st me home.

For this new year that's dawned on me
I thank Thee, oh Thou Father dear,
I'll strive more faithful still to be,
Still more to feel Thee ever near.

What it may have for me in store
I do not know, I cannot see,
But let me trust Thee more and more,
And strive Thy faithful son to be.

And if more days on earth are given
Let me devote them Lord to Thee,
That stepping-stones they be towards Heaven,
Where all at last will gathered be.

Another year of opening morn,
Another year of setting sun,
With each new hopes in me be born,
In each Thy will more fully done.

MAY.

The sweet May days have come again,
So full of sun and showers,
We'll strive to forget every pain
Amid the springing flowers.

The air more pure and bracing seems
Before the summer's glare,
The hedgerow too with flowers teems
So homely, sweet, and fair.

How voiceful too the birds e'er sound
As they fly through the air,
The cuckoo's call does now abound,
And larks sing free from care.

How beautiful are all the trees
Decked in their new-born green,
As through the gently passing breeze
Their foliage can be seen.

The busy bees too, how they hum,
As they fly on their way,
Reminding us as near they come
Of flowers sweet and gay.

Oh merry month we e'er love thee,
Thou art so bright and fair,
So full of freshness and of glee,
So free from anxious care.

But beyond this we look to thee
As to a gateway fair
Through which thou leadest us to see
The glories of the year.

So as we wander through thy days
Begone too anxious care,
We'll learn from thee how best to praise
While we life's burdens bear.

THE SKYLARK.

Oh merry bird that sings so sweet
From out the deep blue sky,
I gladly your sweet song e'er greet
As the warm days draw nigh.

Throughout the long dark winter days
I know not where you've been,
I'm glad you've come again to praise,
And that once more you're seen.

I like to hear your cheerful song
Though you do fly so high,
Far, far away from busy throng
Your course e'er seems to lie.

In many a quiet country place
I often sit and gaze
To see if I your course can trace
As your clear voice you raise.

It's very difficult I own,
So very small you are,
You move so quickly, you have flown
From where I thought you were.

Yet often through the clear bright air
Your merry notes are heard,
So free you seem from every care,
My little warbling bird.

I wish I could with you oft rise
Above low-lying earth,
And 'mid the bright and sunny skies
Catch something of your mirth.

And then amid my toil and care
Remember oft my song,
And strengthened by some vision rare
Be faithful in life's throng.

From year to year dear skylark sing,
Your songs I love to hear,
O'er earth let your sweet warblings ring,
They seem to bring good cheer.

FALLING LEAVES.

Ye falling leaves that strew
The path on which I tread
I'm sorry to lose you,
You surely are not dead.

Of every size and shape,
And varying color too,
The landscape you well drape
With glories ever new.

A little while ago
Upon the trees you hung,
The wind did round you blow,
The birds around you sung.

You made the trees so gay
With tints of green and brown,
And now they're bare and grey,
And all their beauty's flown.

As now the time has come
For you to pass away
I feel I cannot sum
The good you've done each day.

You tell me winter's near
With cold, and frost, and snow,
When it is hard to bear
The winds which oft do blow.

Though withered, brown, and sere,
And dead you seem to be,
Still you've done your work here.
And so away you flee.

Yet not in vain has been
The time you spent on earth,
You gladdened many a scene
With beauty since your birth.

On you the sun did shine,
The rain fell on you too,
Through veins, cells, tubes so fine
You helped the trees to grow.

And when your work was done
A richer glory came
With setting of your sun
Which made you all aflame.

And now you scattered lie,
By wind tossed to and fro,
And as you hasten bye
You seem to murmur so.

Of you sometimes we'll think
Through the long winter days,
And with our thoughts we'll link
Some tender, grateful praise.

On many a summer day
You've made my heart so glad,
And brightened too life's way
That I could not feel sad.

The birds your death now mourn
And fly away from here
To seek some other bourn
Where leaves will still be near.

Oh rustling leaves that lie
  Upon my path all round,
Since you, alas! must die
  More rich you make the ground.

And when at set of sun
  The summons comes to me
May I, my work well done,
  Like you, still glorious be.

THE BIRD'S AUTUMNAL SONG.

You merry little bird
Whose cheerful notes are heard
On this dull autumn day,
Accept my thanks, I pray.

Your friends have flown away
To spend their winter day
'Mid brighter, clearer skies,
Where the sun still will rise.

But you still linger here
As if you scarce knew fear,
And if I'm lone and sad
Your song will make me glad.

You fly from tree to tree
So quickly, I scarce see,
And your glad notes still ring
E'en while you're on the wing.

I stand to look at you,
You oft elude my view,
Yet your clear notes I hear,
They sound as if quite near.

The leaves now soon will fall,
The flowers wither, all,
Come winter's frost and snow
When the cold winds will blow.

Then all will seem so dull,
Of dreariness so full,
'Mid this depressing gloom
For you there's always room.

So little friend still stay,
Oh do not go away,
But sing your cheerful song
Throughout the winter long.

And when for food you want
E'en though my store be scant
Some crumbs for you I'll place,
Take them and sing your grace.

Whene'er its very cold
I pray you then, make bold
Within my greenhouse fly,
Amongst my flowers pry.

Then perch upon some plant,
And little songster grant
To me some song to raise,
Some joyous notes of praise.

Safe shelter from alarm,
To you shall come no harm,
At morn, noon, eventide
Sweet singer, there abide.

Oh can I from you learn
When life seems cold and stern
To ever thankful be,
In all my God e'er see.

For though the earth seem drear
You sing to me good cheer,
And as I go my way
I'm safely led each day.

So on this autumn day
Sweet messenger still stay,
While all around looks drear
Sing me a song of cheer.

AUTUMN.

The mellow autumn time is here
With luscious fruit and golden grain,
The richest season of the year,
When earth yields man so much of grain.

How lovely looks the golden grain
As it waves in the passing breeze,
It's grown apace 'neath sun and rain;
How glorious too are all the trees.

The summer freshness may have gone
Which clothed the trees in brightest green,
But still more lovely they have grown
With autumn's tints, than we've e'er seen.

With what a charm the earth is filled
Of sweetest scent and glowing tint,
All anxious thought should now be stilled
Since of earth's riches there's no stint.

A beauty gilds the waning year
We in no other season see,
Of sunset tints and balmy air,
Of flowers, fruit, and ruddy tree.

Oh God! Thou lead'st us through the year
From early spring to autumn brown,
Thy laws are sure, why need we fear,
Since needful crops once more have grown.

'Tis true the days are shortening fast,
And warbling birds scarce more are heard,
Rich autumn's glories will not last,
Yet still we know Our Father's near.

But glorious autumn we love thee,
Thy fruits and flowers, tints and scent,
And in thy beauties we can see
God has some message to us sent.

What cheery message do you bring?
Sweet harvest season of the year,
For time is ever on the wing,
And we now face the waning year.

We know your leaves are falling fast,
And now your flowers so soon decay,
Oft comes along the stormy blast
And blows them hurriedly away.

You tell us of a Father's love
Which does each child of earth surround,
That though He dwells in Heaven above
He on the earth too can be found.

You tell us of a Father's care,
A Father's ceaseless bounty too,
Which ever bring us blessings rare
And strength our daily tasks to do.

And as in early days of spring
The farmer sows his tiny seeds
Which, in the autumn, surely bring
Rich harvesting for human needs;

So if each day we sow some seed
Of kindness, goodness, truth, and love,
They'll blossom into fruitful deed,
And make earth more like Heaven above.

And as we gaze o'er earth's fair face
Throughout this lovely autumn time
God's love of beauty we can trace
Helping our thoughts higher to climb.

So gladly with each circling year
The harvest song we e'er will raise,
As home the golden sheaves we bear
Our Father's bounty we will praise.

THE SHORTEST DAY.

The shortest day once more is here
That tells the waning of the year,
The darkest hours we leave behind
In trust still brighter ones to find.

The dying year now soon will pass,
How quickly time now flies, alas!
It seems but yesterday since we
First hoped this year a friend might be.

But some dear friends have passed away,
Bright hopes have faded many a day,
Heights we had hoped to climb at length
Have proved too much for our scant strength.

Yet Father we will not despond
Nor look too eagerly beyond,
But thankfully receive each day,
And trust Thou'lt guide us on our way.

Behind we'll leave the cloud, the shade,
And fleeting fancies that soon fade,
We'll journey onwards towards the sun,
With patience strive our race to run.

Before us lie the lengthening days
Wherein Our Father's name to praise,
His glorious will fulfil anew,
And strive to be more faithful, true.

The future may be all unknown,
And sometimes we feel all alone,
Our Father will not let us stray,
But bless us on our onward way.

Then come what may with the new year
We'll go to meet it without fear,
E'er hoping, working for the best,
And trust Our Father for the rest.

So hail we now the shortest day
However dark may be our way,
Though frost and snow, though ice and hail,
And winter's cold may now prevail,

Once more will come the summer sun
And joyfully his course will run,
Make the earth blossom 'neath his sway,
Make glad man's heart from day to day.

The glorious season is at hand
When joy prevails throughout the land,
When peace and good will should abound,
And more of Christ in us be found.

So welcome, welcome shortest day,
That brings the parting of the way,
We'll forward look with gladsome cheer,
Knowing Our Father's ever near

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